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By
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Prose and Verse

By

Frederick Tibbetts

1909

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The writer's custom is to dedicate
The published work to friends, both tried
and true.
I have no wish to quit the beaten path,
So I just dedicate this book to you.

--T.

Pictures in words are for memory's gallery where colors never fade.

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Mem'ry's to the mind as dawn is to the day.
Each lifts the shadows and drives the mists away.

THE FINGER OF OLD TORCH

Of all the waters cradled by their shores;
In rivers, lakes and seas and earth's spring pores;
The silvers, azures, em'ralds of Torch Lake,
In its bravura numbers,
And in its placid slumbers,
No more poetic dream the artist's brush may wake.

Between the ranging hills the waters play,
Reflecting all the glories of the day;
And if 'tis forest's wilds one loves the best,
Old Torch just marks the changes,
And parts the wooded ranges
That skirt its verdant borders East and West.

How often, when I've thought of peace and rest,
I've found them both on Torch's billowed breast;
Until one eve I saw a finger there;
Just point in one direction—
Just point without deflection—
I saw it in the water and the air.

It held its point wherever I might steer;
Though North or South, its constancy was clear.
It was no time for idle thought nor jest,
To rest my oar and linger,
And watch the pointing finger,
That never pointed true North, South nor West.

Unless I closed my eyes, 'twas ever there.
Its steady pointing seemed to me a dare.
Resolved to follow on and find the light,
And with the finger haunting,
My courage almost daunting,
I sought the shore to solve the phantom's flight.

I found a gem. Old Torch had crystallized
Her depth and azure lights, a jewel, prized.
A blue-white diamond 'twas the waters kissed.
'Twas mine without the asking;
'Twas mine without the masking.
The finger of Old Torch dissolved in mist.

JUST AS SHE PLEASED

"Going up," called the elevator boy, and I stepped into the suspended car, and inquired for George Barton, attorney. "Tenth," promptly responded his highness, "Ups and Downs," and in another moment I was walking into the elegant offices of George Barton, the prominent corporation attorney, just as from an inner room came in harsh tones:

"Blame you, no sir, not a cent."

There was no one in the room I was entering. A typewriter occupied its accustomed place near a window. It was dust covered, which indicated that it had received neither attention nor usage for several days. The afternoon was nearing its close, and the view from the open windows disclosed the flat tops of numerous buildings in a broadening circle, and, for a mile or two, the gabled roofs of all classes of home buildings, some standing out boldly against the green beyond; others partially hidden by the graceful elms with which the city was plentifully grown. From the outskirts of this city of elms to the partially hid-

den coast line, a public park and a wide expanse of nature invited to restful quiet from the noisy whirl of the city. Beyond, sky and water joined in such gentle blending of color at this particular time of day that only a guess could locate the horizon.

On account of the forcible exclamation that I had overheard on entering, I deemed it unwise to disturb the speaker. While I gazed on the sea and all between, the earnest conversation was carried on in subdued, almost inaudible tones.

George Barton, Jr., and I were college chums, and I had often heard him say that there was no love lost between his father, George Barton, Sr., and himself; in fact, the senior considered the junior no more nor less than a fool. On this particular day, George Jr. had decided to tell his father that marriage with a most estimable widow necessitated an increase of allowance. It was George Sr.'s reply I had unwittingly overheard. George Jr. came from his father's private office saying:

"We leave this evening for two months, and as Paris is out of the question, I guess we will take Oliver's cottage at the Palms. I wish you would come and make us a visit, father."

"No! No!"

I could hear his chair creak an accompaniment as he turned to his desk.

Of course George Jr. saw me. He shook hands silently, as he hastily drew me from the office.

"Going down," called the approaching elevator boy. "Down," replied George Jr., and we descended to the street before another word was spoken.

"Awful glad to see you, old man. Good many things happened since I left you at Montreal three months ago. As you surely have guessed by this time, I am married. Who? Listen," and he whispered to me the familiar name of an old acquaintance who had taken the long journey and left behind a beautiful daughter and a charming widow yet in her womanly prime of life.

George Jr. laughed as he told me how acquaintances and neighbors gossiped about the "daughter's intended," as he called from time to time, never guessing that the mother and not the daughter was the shrine of his devotion, until the announcement of the quiet marriage. George Jr. admitted his paternal feeling for the daughter, and declared she

should ever find in a fatherly devotion a safeguard from all distasteful alliances.

A note, a few days later, brought assurances of the safe arrival at the Palms of Mr. and Mrs. Barton, Jr. After a time I again visited the offices of George Barton, Sr. I found him at his desk. A new typewriter, which had taken the place of the old one, near the window, was being operated by a handsomely dressed and altogether attractive young woman, who announced my arrival by carrying my card to the elder Barton. I recognized her at a glance, but as she did not deign to acknowledge the acquaintanceship, I concealed my surprise at finding her in her present position.

My professional business being soon finished, I was departing, when George Barton, Sr., addressed me, as he called it, on a matter of private concern.

"You are acquainted, I understand, with Miss Herbert and her family?" I replied in the affirmative, when he said that he desired to confide in me and to employ me in looking after certain settlements.

I readily guessed the nature of his disclosures. About the time of the departure of George Jr. and wife, the young Miss Herbert

had called, presenting numerous commendatory letters, and requesting a position as amanuensis. As she proved to be, upon trial, not only an expert, but an exceedingly attractive additon to the office, George Barton, Sr., offered her a permanent position, and especially favorable remuneration. Not many weeks had passed before the old gentleman began to realize the great pleasure he daily enjoyed in association with the cheerful, happy disposition of his employee. A holiday excused her from official duties, and that day was the longest and dreariest in George Sr.'s life. It was his custom to dictate correspondence to her, and chat between letters. He told her all about his past life. He even spoke of George Jr., although in not a particularly complimentary way. He told her of his early love for and devotion to George Jr.'s mother. He was a kindly old man in his way, and when he finally, though in decidedly professional manner, told her of his love for her, promising her everything that heart could desire, she gently reached up, and placing her hand over his mouth, shook her head as if in doubt. She glanced toward the windows, and a tear glistened in her eye.

As she stood trembling at his side, he urged

her not to give her answer to his earnest request that she become his wife until she could willingly speak that always hoped-for "Yes."

Not many weeks had passed, and she had spoken that little word which carries with it the assurance of the conquest won. It was to make the final settlements with Miss Herbert's parents that I was engaged. I promised to acquaint them of his most liberal offer, it being to present Margaret Herbert, on their wedding day, with a check for one hundred thousand dollars, to do with "just as she pleased."

I could hardly contain my thoughts until I could reach the street. I immediately wrote to George Jr., betraying professional secrets, although in the line of duty. The terms of settlement were satisfactory to Miss Herbert's parents, and the wedding day decided upon.

Never did church choir and organ harmonize in more delightful unison than when they proclaimed the blushing maid the bride of the white-haired counselor. Never did young gallant devote more careful attention and loving care to a bride than did this man of long years of lonesome life. Within an hour of the ceremony he handed to his wife a certified check for one hundred thousand dollars, pay-

able to her order. The amount was only a small portion of his possessions, but in the weeks to come he carefully noted the paid checks as they were returned by his banker. He had not asked his wife what she intended doing with the money. He thought the returned check would show that, and so it did. He recognized it one morning, and hastily turned it over to note the endorsement, and he read this: "Pay to the order of Mrs. George Barton, Jr." Signed, "Mrs. George Barton, Sr."

"Tenth," called the elevator boy, and George Jr. walked into his father's office.

"What does this mean, sir?" inquired the old gentleman, handing the check to George Jr. George Jr., taking the check in his left hand, extended his right hand and congratulated his father in the heartiest manner.

"But this check; why is it made payable to your wife?"

"I can tell you, George," said Mrs. George Sr., entering just at the moment. "You promised to let me do just as I wished with that check, and as I have everything, and you, George, I gave the check to mother and father in partial payment of a debt of gratitude."

"A debt of grat—," turning to George Jr.

"Then you are my son, and I am your son-in-law."

"Yes, father, I am your father-in-law."

"A fool for a father-in-law," said the old gentleman, with some heat.

"Yes, father, we come high, but you must have us. Bless you, my children. Mother and I are off to Paris. Only have time to say goodbye."

"Going down." "Down," and the paternal son-in-law and his bride were left to study the perplexing question of relationship.

Years later, when the respective heirs of this strangely mixed quartette tried to establish claims of priority, there was only one point upon which their almost maddened minds could agree, and that was, that not even lawyers should be allowed to do just as they please; for George Sr., who was the father of George Jr., became by marriage the son-in-law of his own son, and George Jr. became the father-in-law of his own father. Consequently the son of George Jr. was George Sr.'s brother-in-law as well as his grandson, and the son of George Sr. was George Jr.'s brother and also his grandson. George Jr.'s son was the nephew of George Sr.'s son, as was George Sr.'s son his uncle.

As George Jr. was George Sr.'s father-in-law, his son became the brother-in-law of his own grandfather, and George Sr. became the great-grandfather of his own son and grandfather to himself.

Other than this deponent saith not. You have the facts to do with just as you please.

IN RETURN

We get in life just what we trade for;
Sometimes delivery is delayed.
We fool ourselves in hope to get more;
But in the end we've merely played.

We've played the game and made a good run;
We've played it too, both loose and fast.
We've won a goal and lost the next one;
We've grieved a while — forgot the past.

"To give and take," a phrase that is pat,
You cannot always win the stake,
For he who gives may then be sure that
It soon will be his turn to take.

In making trades with one another,
A smile, a tear, may win a friend,
A helping hand may gain a brother,
A frown, a kick, may friendship end.

So in this life just carry gladness,
Disburse alike to friend and foe,
For you will find enough of sadness
As through life's ins and outs you go.

Just lend the helping hand so cheerful,
Show one and all your happy side;
And of the outcome ne'er be fearful
When you have swelled the gladsome tide.

LIFE'S PLAYERS

What scenes of indescribable beauty were set here and there in this vast theatre of mother earth. Surely 'twas a master's hand that guided the rivulet down the mountain side, through the valley and on, to lose itself in the ocean's depths. 'Twas a master's hand that reared the mountain peaks in gigantic splendor. 'Twas a master's hand that peopled his stage with countless millions of diversified characters, some to play leading parts and many others to fill those so absolutely necessary characters of supernumeraries.

A player might be cast for such parts in life that his senses would never receive a jar. His eyes might rest only on symmetrical forms; his ears might hear only harmonious strains of soothing music; his nostrils might never be confronted by harsher scent than the perfume of the rose; his touch might never rest on anything coarser than a baby's dimpled cheek—but what part would he play in this life of ours?

Steel is tempered by harsh contrasts, as is life's player. He may bask today in scenes

of grandeur, 'neath the shade of lofty mountain tops; on the mossy banks of rushing streams; in the seclusion of a comfortable home, surrounded by those he holds dearer than all. Tomorrow he may have to stem the current of the river and climb the mountain side, leave the home and those he loves, and answer life's calls to duty. When duty's commands are obeyed, life's player may sometimes return to the paths he loves. There is no more beautiful experience than that enjoyed by the player who has about played his part, who has stemmed his rivers, who has climbed his mountains, and is then cast to play his last act amid the comforts of home, cherished by those dear to him, rounding out by kindly actions the part he has played so well.

Beneath an old oak tree sat a straight and rugged figure. His eye still flashed the thought of an active mind, although the mass of white hair truthfully told his few years yet remaining. There had been, in all his later life, but few afternoons he could not have been seen under the old oak, which seemed to conjure for him memories of the past, for all who had spoken him well, knew that he had planted the acorn from which the lofty oak had grown. It was an old story, and scarcely a living be-

ing in the little village but had heard it years before.

Possibly on account of lack of hearers, possibly from the fact that few strangers came that way, the old man's eye brightened when he noted the approach of one who had never lounged in the shade of the oak.

As the stranger came nearer he was greeted in that particularly courteous manner in which years bears to years.

The old man's welcome being as grateful to the stranger as was the shade of the oak, small wonder that he sought rest and a breath to cool.

"Been walking far, sir?"

"All my life"; and then fearing his meaning might not be quite clear, added, "My waking hours."

Seeing that the stranger was little inclined to talk, but content to listen, the old man said: "Well, sir; I have lived my life here—right here near this oak tree. I was born in the old log cabin back behind the house yonder, and I am sure if I should wander many miles from this old tree something would happen it, as it did to the others. This, and that one there, are all that are left of six, and that

one 'pears to be dying. It never was as strong and thrifty as my old tree."

While the old man was speaking, he placed his hands caressingly on the oak, and as the stranger appeared to be interested, he continued his story:

"There were six of us boys that always gathered the first berries in spring and the last walnuts in autumn. We caught two-pounders on pin hooks down there in the run where the sunlight shows silver. We went to school together, and when the little church off there was built, we each had a wedding—that is, all but Jim—Jim was a little more to me than the others, for you see, Jim and I were brothers. We might just as well have all been brothers, for we would have missed one just as much as any other; but 'twas Jim who went away and we never heard from him again.

"It does seem sometimes, when I sit out here, that I cannot live another day without Jim, and then I look up and find the old tree still living when the others, one by one, have died and been burned for firewood.

"The day I was twelve years old, we six gathered some acorns. We planted our largest ones here by the road. Jack put his down there by that rock and thirty years later light-

ning split the tree half and half, and within a year Jack was found dead out in the meadow, after a storm. Next to Jack's acorn Jim planted his. Soon after he went away his tree died and we have never heard from Jim. Next coming this way Will planted his acorn and twenty years ago Will died in the winter time and his tree put out but few buds in the spring and was chopped down the following autumn. There, where that tree stands, Albert planted his acorn and while he has been dead three years his tree still lives, but it isn't what it should be for thrift. Albert married Margaret. It was Margaret Jim loved. That's why Jim went away.

Between this tree and that, George planted the acorn that never grew, and here I planted mine and it has grown to always welcome the children home from school, and the old folks who come to enjoy its shade."

As the old man ceased speaking the stranger arose and pointing, said: "Down by the rock was Jack's tree. Poor old Jack Conley. Next came Jim's tree? No, Harry you're wrong. Will came next, then Albert, and the one that lives is Jim's tree—my old oak. Harry, don't you know me? It's Jim, your own brother."

It was with a glistening eye and a shaking

frame that leaned against the old oak, that Harry, for they were boys again, stretched out his arms and welcomed his brother home.

Full many hours they sat under first one old oak and then the other until Jim had told a life's story and listened to another.

It is possible to see the brothers any pleasant afternoon under one or the other of the oaks and oftentimes they have an always welcome companion, a charming old lady, her contented, smiling face, wreathed in a garland of silver, whom the brothers call Margaret and who in turn calls them Jim and Harry.

As the ocean in its tide, human life finds in love, the force that carries far o'er the sea and casts upon some friendly shore the heart in need, but in need no more.

ALL LOVE IS BLIND

The blinded Armoor stood with parted lips,
And gently whispered "You, for you I live.
Your presence here is not unknown to me.
I have no sight, yet still, the blind may live
And feel, and think, and know the loved one
near."

The arms were raised that sense of touch
might find,
And plead in mute though loving earnestness.
All Armoor trembling, yearned assuring word
That he might loose the pent and burning
flood
And let the heart but speak its dream and
hope.

No word had reached his ear. Despair was
his,
When dropping to the sands, imprinted there
He found first one, then followed many proofs.
On bended knees, with hope anew, he crept
The sloping sands, by footprints led to her.

She sprang away and Armoor, rising called:
"You are so near and yet a universe
No more completely separates the stars.
Unless you come to me or guide me there
No hope, no life, can ere be mine again."

In silent, noiseless, flight she moved away,
No footprints told her path, no word farewell.
The blinded Armoor stood with list'ning ear
Until the life's blood ebbed its hopeless tide,
Then sank to kiss the footprints in the sand.

THE LAST FIVE

Berner Hope was still a young man. For eight years he had been employed in the offices of a Street Railway Company as stenographer and all-round office man. For three years he had been drawing eleven dollars a week. He had been kept busy. An industrious, ever-watchful employee is always kept busy.

Berner Hope was honest, more so possibly with his employer than with himself; for he had expected that his conscientious, good work would commend him to a better salary, and he had not asked for an increase.

He finally came to a somewhat sudden decision.

He quietly tapped the door of the superintendent's office late one afternoon. In response to the superintendent's summons, "Come in," Berner opened the door and entered.

The superintendent, Mr. Rogers, sat at his desk. He was a man of medium height, somewhat heavily built, and as he swung around in his chair his iron grey hair and smoothly

shaven face gave a strong impression of the modern man of business.

"What is it, Berner?"

"Mr. Rogers, I desire to tender my resignation."

"What, going to quit?" inquired the superintendent.

"I resign my position."

"Oh, come now, what is this, a strike?"

"No sir, I have considerable outside business and I feel compelled to resign."

"Outside business, Berner, I wasn't aware that you had been carrying a side line;" said Mr. Rogers, smiling.

"I have not;" replied Berner, looking across the street.

"May I ask what it is that is going to keep you so busy?"

"I — I expect to be pretty busy looking for a better position."

"Oh, that's it, is it? Now, look here, my boy, you stay with us; I will see that you receive more money. We will make it twelve fifty for awhile and then we will make it fifteen a week. What do you say to that?"

"Thank you, Mr. Rogers; but I have decided to resign."

"All right, my boy, let me know how you

get along. I don't know just where I am going to find a man to take your place; but be assured I'll be glad to hear that you do well."

Berner took the proffered hand and his voice trembled as he thanked the superintendent and said "Good-bye."

Weeks of busy idleness stretched into months and Berner Hope's savings of years were steadily taking wings. It was only when his money had dwindled to a solitary five dollar bill that Berner entertained a thought of trying his luck with Mr. Rogers. He had left his name and address with numerous employers. He had only read the want columns of the newspapers for weeks. He had tramped the city from north to south and east to west. He had found one place not quite as good as his old position. For a few days he enjoyed a bright prospect which did not materialize.

As he stood in the doorway of a prominent place of business he overheard one man say to another:

"But he must be honest. The position is one of great responsibility and the man who fills it must be honest."

Berner followed at a distance until the two men entered a large office building. When he came to the elevator his quarry had

reached one of the ten upper floors. As the elevator descended he described his man to the attendant and finally learned that he had followed Mr. Campbell, the general agent of the Old World Insurance Company.

Berner did not call at once. He figured that honest men were so scarce that that job might wait for him if he could quickly originate a plan of action. He examined his purse and found one last five dollar bill and a street car ticket. He knew he was honest and he wanted to prove the fact to Mr. Campbell.

Suddenly Burner turned and made his way to the offices of the Street Railway Company. It was about one-thirty P. M., and as the banks did not close until two he decided to take a chance on finding Mr. Campbell in his office after banking hours, especially as there was no ball game that day. He immediately called on Mr. Rogers.

The superintendent greeted Berner warmly as he said: "I am glad to see you Berner. What can I do for you? Want your old job back?"

"Not yet, Mr. Rogers, but I may."

"I don't wish you any bad luck, my boy, but I hope you will."

Berner smiled, as he said: "Mr. Rogers, may I ask a favor?"

"Certainly, Berner, what is it?"

"Will you lend me your check for twenty-five dollars until late this afternoon or to-morrow morning? I do not want to use the money. I probably will not even cash the check."

"To be sure I will;" and Mr. Rogers turned to his desk and wrote the check.

"Thank you very much, I will return the money or the check not later than tomorrow morning;" and Berner turned to leave.

"Keep it as long as you want it, my boy, but let me see you more often."

Berner thanked Mr. Rogers for his kindness and as the banks would be closed by the time he could call on Mr. Campbell he sought that gentleman's office. Mr. Campbell was busy. After some slight delay Berner was admitted.

"Mr. Campbell, Berner Hope is my name. I overheard you speaking to a gentleman on the street this noon and judging from your remark, I believe you are in need of a man. I desire a position and would be pleased to have your consideration."

Mr. Campbell eyed Berner critically before he spoke.

"What experience have you had?"

"In the insurance business, none; in office work, eight years;" replied Berner.

"You may give me your address, Mr. Hope, you may hear from me later. I have a position that is open, or will be the first of the month. It is office work too, but very particular, very responsible office work. The man who fills the position must be a peer among men in one particular at least; I will see what can be done.

Berner slowly drew his purse from his pocket and removing his last five dollar bill at the same time that he brought out Mr. Rogers' check, he said: "Mr. Campbell, would it be requesting too great a favor to ask you to cash this check. It is after banking hours and I——."

"Well, I,—truth is I—I don't know you, Mr. Hope. Whose signature does the check carry?"

"Mr. Rogers' of the Street Railway Company."

"Who? Oh, Bob Rogers," taking the check. "Why, certainly; just endorse it Mr. Hope."

Berner endorsed the check and Mr. Campbell handed him five five dollar bills. Berner counted the money and as he did so he easily slipped his one, his last bill among the five.

"Pardon me, Mr. Campbell, I believe I have five too much."

"What's that you say?" quickly asked Mr. Campbell; "five too much—let me see. Sure enough, six fives. Thank you for the correction, Mr. Hope."

"Thank you for the accommodation, Mr. Campbell," replied Berner as he prepared to leave the office.

"Look here, young man; you have given me better evidence than I can find by any investigation, that you are honest. Honesty is of the greatest importance in this particular position. I have half a mind—I will, offer you the position. It pays twelve hundred a year with a raise to fifteen hundred in two years. I'm very glad to have that job off my mind. You will take it of course."

Berner was speechless for a minute; but he soon recovered. He had not figured this all out in advance. He had, however, only carried his plans to this certain point. He had not taken into account his own conscience and that stern principle by which he had always lived.

"Mr. Campbell, I cannot do it. Thank you very much, but I was carried away with the idea of impressing you with honesty. I over-

heard your remark that whoever filled the position must be thoroughly honest. You have no idea how I need the position, but I have used a trick to draw your attention and while I thank you from the depths of my being I cannot accept; but I thank you—I thank you;" and he hastily left the office.

As the door closed Mr. Campbell whistled as he said:. "Well I'll be—what do you think of that?"

Berner hastily called on Mr. Rogers, but finding that gentleman busily engaged he left the twenty-five dollars with the superintendent's secretary, taking his receipt. Berner thought afterwards how lucky it was that Mr. Rogers was busy. If his old position had been offered at that moment there would have been no doubt of Berner's acceptance. As it was, Berner emptied his purse by using the street car ticket in going to his room. That night he dreamed of a man who lived happily on an extremely small salary; a man who drove his automobile on eleven dollars a week; a man who could dress well and support a family and own a country place on eleven—but why recount a dream. The morning's sunlight brought to Berner's room a postman and the postman brought a letter. The envelope bore

the card of the Old World Insurance Company, and as Berner opened it a five dollar bill fell to the floor. Berner removed the letter and read:

Mr. Berner Hope,

Dear Sir:—I have been thinking over our talk of this afternoon and I am determined not to lose you. I insist on your acceptance of my proposition. You are honest all right, I know, for you never would have confessed that you used the trick had honesty not been your compelling force. Nevertheless, nerve and cleverness are as necessary requisites as honesty in the insurance business.

Please let me have your acceptance as early as possible. I enclose the five dollar bill. You may need it, at any rate it is yours.

Don't fail to call tomorrow.

Yours very truly,

J. D. CAMPBELL.

Berner finished reading the letter and running his hands deep into his penniless pockets, said to himself: "I guess I will call on Mr. Rogers and make sure he received his twenty-five all right."

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

The year that passes, count its hours sublime,
In onward, steady, constant flight of time;
No minute does it shorten as it flies;
No second does it quicken ere it dies.

The silver thread of time bears seconds rare,
Like crystal beads of dew on morning's air.
The sunbeam sips the dew as vapors rise;
The seconds all are ours, a golden prize.

We gave the year that's past; we give the new
Our efforts best, endeavor constant, true.
Our thoughts will be the seconds of our minds;
Good deeds the hours, and hope, the tie that binds.

LIGHTS AND SHADES

The day was slipping into evening and the storm without only tended to enhance the charm of the home scene within.

It was a pretty scene, this home, made so by its inhabitants, a man in the prime of life, and his wife, but a year or two his junior.

The windows were shaded, and the firelight heightened the color in Mary's cheeks. She was a busy little housewife, and found life's pleasures around this, her fireside for the past two years. She and John were married two years and fourteen days before this particular day, and every hour had brought its own reward to Mary and to John.

Mary was sitting in a rocking chair near the open fireplace. Her needlework and hands had fallen idly and lay in her lap as she realized that the uncertain light was not sufficient to work by. Her head rested on the high back of the chair; her eyes were closed, and she whispered to herself: "It is true, it is true; how great a world it is. Only a few short years ago and I was a child, finding my pleas-

ures and dividing my childish sorrows at dear old mother's knee; and, now; think now. How shall I tell John? What will he say? Will he love me more? Ah, I know."

As Mary glanced at the timepiece over the fireplace she started up quickly. "How the time flies. It is almost time for him now, and I've so much to do."

She smoothed the pillows on the couch; she hummed softly as she glanced from the window in anticipation of the coming of John. She left the thoughtful, loving touches about the room that transform the enclosure called "house" into the palace called "home."

Just before going to the garden for a bit of green, and the flowers she knew John would look for, she brought from their hiding place a roomy pair of slippers, and placed them before a favored rocking chair.

'Twas then she went to the garden, leaving to fill her vacated space a breath of all that's sacred, that's pure, that's lovable—an invisible, though quivering, assured something, which follows in the wake of the spiritual soul. It was this something, this presence, this nectar of being or having lately been, which greeted John as he entered his home. He drank his fill of it, though wrought as he was, before he

threw himself, without removing his hat or coat, full length upon the welcoming couch. It was there that the strong man's long-pent-up emotions burst the bounds of loving solicitude, and in the sanctity of home his deep sobs brought the peace his mind could not conjure.

With a handful of flowers, Mary came, all unconscious of the presence and the sorrow of John. She dropped the flowers upon the table as she ran to him, and kneeling by his side, spoke to him in a low voice, already choked with their grief.

"John—dear John—I am here. Tell me—do tell me, John—"

With an effort he checked his outward display, and placing his arm about her, he tried to say, "In just a minute, Mary."

Mary raised her hand and lovingly removed the hat that covered his head, and coming still closer to him she seemed to whisper to him; and if she kissed the troubled head, it was to prove his grief was hers.

Such a heaven has been the haven of many a mariner on life's troubled sea, and so it was with John, for he soon raised himself from the couch and thanked Mary with a kiss.

"Forgive me—dear—it is nothing.' Twas foolish—but—" and he looked into her eyes

until his own glistened with loving gratefulness.

Mary, still clinging to him, falteringly asked: "What was it, John?" She straightened the couch pillows, and anxiously awaited his reply.

"I don't know just how to tell you, Mary. I have pictured to myself so many times how I might some day tell you so different a version of the same story—but—maybe—it is just as well—"

"I am sure it is, dear John."

"You know how irksome it is to write the commercial stuff that has been my lot ever since I became a newspaper man? Oh, yes, sometimes a good story falls to me and I find pleasure in my work—and I am only too glad to keep right at it, if I could only see some silver lining to the cloud—if I could know that some day—but I don't, I don't—"

"Yes, but John—it will come, dear, I know it will," and she crowned him with her confidence in his ability.

"I cannot help but think that you speak truly, Mary—but, sometimes—today—I, for a minute, lost hope. Let me tell you something, about which I have planned as a surprise to you.

"During nearly all of my spare time the last

two years I have been writing a story—a book.

"I have put into it all that is in me. The general plot, the characters, all are mine. The scenes are the pictures of my imagination. The people are the players upon my mental stage. They speak as I would have them. The story is full of action; it has go and human interest. Why, dear, I wrote chapter after chapter right here in this room. Of course you thought I was working on my notes for the next day, and I always had the notes at hand, to satisfy you, but I have been living in dreamland."

"And you have been happy, John?"

"Yes, Mary, happy—happy in dreamland. But listen—I have sent my manuscript to publishers—first to one and then to another. Some returned it so quickly that I am sure they did not give even a passing notice. Others kept the story so long that I felt sure of success only to be more sorely disappointed.

"You remember the evening I called for you at Firestone's, when you thought I was ill?"

"Yes, John."

"The manuscript had been in the hands of H's for six long weeks, and I almost knew I had landed. It was returned that afternoon. Some weeks ago I sent it to the last available

publisher, and it was returned to me today, with a note, saying that on account of a congestion of material, their readers could not take it up for some time to come. It has been the rounds, Mary, and the disappointment was, for a minute, too much for me. How I wanted to surprise you—and instead, I am making you miserable; forgive me, dear, I'll forget it all."

"No, John, we will not forget, and do you think that you would have surprised or pleased me more by finding a publisher? You are mistaken, my husband. The true greatness comes in the authorship, not in the publicity—'Full many a rose is born to blush unseen'—you know the rest, and no doubt, John, but that the rose was beautiful."

"Yes, Mary, but—"

"Ah, John, you are ambitious; we're young, your time will come."

Taking Mary in his arms, John said: "It has come, Mary, for you are the fulfillment of my ambitions. It is for you that I crave recognition of my hopes in life. Don't you know that, Mary?"

"Yes, John. John, dear."

"Yes, Mary."

"I have a secret, too."

"What is it, Mary?"

"Are you sure you want to know?"

Mary had been kneeling near to John. He raised her by her arms to his lap as he said: "Don't think, dear, that I am so taken up with my own thoughts that I am not always interested in yours. Of course I want to know your secret."

Mary looked into his eyes, and finding the always steadfast responsiveness, laid her head on his shoulder and whispered her secret.

Quietly and thoughtfully John drew her closer, and asked, "Why haven't you told me sooner?"

Without moving her head, Mary whispered, "I wasn't sure until today, John."

It was with almost sacred awe John's arms folded his dear one closer as he said, more to himself than to her, "And I thought I could write a book."

From the depths of her seclusion, Mary asked, "Are you happy, John?"

"Happy, Mary; I am more than happy—I am content. The unfolding of this page in life is already heaping its great rewards."

"LOVE"

THE GLOSSARY OF LIFE

Of joys in life beholding,
None sing so sweet a song,
As love in its unfolding;
Make its unfolding long.

Love lives in greater measure
With love for love returned.
Make love your own dear treasure
When this sure truth is learned.

Receive and give unceasing;
'Tis yours to give and keep;
And with the years increasing
'Twill grow, grow sure and deep.

While love's a song of nature,
It is the word to heed,
For love's a nomenclature
Of life that's life indeed.

ACTAH

Acta', as she was called by the boys, never knew, and never cared, where she was born. Her earlier recollections included the same scenes and nearly the same people with whom she had been acquainted all her life. Death had deprived her of but one of the playmates of her earlier years; her dear old Dad.

Actah's father and the boys had, in their own way, taken the place of the mother she had never known. Her home was on her father's ranch, Checotah, in Oklahoma, and her companions were the cowboys and ranchmen in her father's employ.

Actah had grown, in nineteen years, from a veritable "babe of the plains," to a graceful, good to look upon, daring girl of the West, dressed in buckskin and mounted on the finest type of saddle horse the West afforded.

Surrounded as she was and knowing only ranchmen it is but natural to suppose that she acquired the characteristics of such men, but the supposition is erroneous. True, she could ride a horse without the saddle and rope a steer as dexterously as any cowboy, but this

out in the air life seemed to have only added power to the charm of her personal beauty. Many on the ranch who had seen and timed her, claimed that she could, for a hundred yards, give chase to a frantic steer, rope, throw and tie him in thirty and one-fourth seconds; a feat rarely accomplished by the most expert cowboys.

Not all her time, however, was given up to these games of the fields, for not only the ranch-house but the quarters of the boys held many evidences of her womanly presence and activity. These took the form of little attentions that only a woman's mind can originate, and that only a kindly disposed friend would execute.

The boys were none the less thoughtful and Actah's life was never dull nor commonplace.

Years ago when Actah was a babe, her father came to Checotah with Old Dave, and to the day of her father's death Old Dave was his right-hand man, always ready and willing to oversee any enterprise. To Old Dave's credit let it be recorded, that he seldom took the wrong trail and nearly always succeeded. It was he who passed upon the applications of the boys who wanted jobs. He was familiar with the reputations of those who had repu-

tations and he could size up an unknown and give him a reputation at first sight. Old Dave seldom erred in his judgment of human nature. He acquired the name "Old Dave," when his son, Young Dave, came to be looked upon as one of the boys of Checotah ranch.

Between Old Dave and his son there was an exceptional bond of sympathy. There was a charm in the youngster's calm demeanor that seemed to speak to Old Dave as a voice from the one whose absence, which, on account of the startling similarity of characteristics in the boy, was the less keenly felt. Many hours had Old Dave studied the younger mind as it developed and disclosed itself in the deliberate and determined actions of his son. He was proud of the boy's physical development, his skill in the saddle, his unfaltering determination and his straightforward, frank manner.

One of Old Dave's most able lieutenants on the ranch was Bronco Charley, a daring rider, although in the exclusive presence of men, a rough and altogether disagreeable fellow. His past was just what might have been expected by any reader of character, seeing him for the first time. He had killed his man and it was sometimes whispered that he had killed his woman, too. He was, however, a valuable

man on the ranch. In Actah's presence Bronco Charley was every inch a gentleman and the boys soon learned when to approach him for favors. He would have willingly loaned, even his rope, if he had been asked for it in Actah's presence. He had long been accredited with having saved the life of Old Dave in the earlier and more turbulent days. Probably on account of the fact the friendship that existed between Old Dave and Bronco Charley was the more lasting.

At the time of the death of her father, Actah became the sole owner of Checotah, and with Old Dave as overseer, the ranch was prospering.

The following spring, a Colonel Malford came to Checotah and his coming was long to be remembered. He was organizing his wildest of "Wild West Shows" to be exhibited at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at Saint Louis.

The boys were called in. Old Dave and Actah were more than willing to spend, what seemed to them a holiday, and the outcome of the Colonel's visit was that all the experts, in their respective lines of achievement, were engaged. The one exception to this plan was Young Dave. He was to be left in charge of

Checotah. This decision was reached after a whispered conference between Bronco Charley and Old Dave.

Young Dave accepted the decision without comment but the blue sky, the atmosphere, all of Checotah might have been removed, only leaving Young Dave on bed rock to attend himself and life would have held just as much for him as it did when he heard his father's decision. The one thought that Actah had remained silent and in that way showed her willingness to leave "her all" in his care was the consolation that prompted his silence. It was a trust and he thought he knew its meaning.

After three weeks of rehearsal the entire production was removed to Saint Louis in time for the opening of the great fair.

To Actah's mind, the change from ranch life to the crowded grounds of the fair was like the first carrolling of a gazelle. Had it not been for the interest she took in the public performances her pony's head would have been turned toward Checotah and she would have ridden to her accustomed freedom.

The show life became a continuous round of rehearsal and public performance. New features were added daily. The fight between the

white settler, aided by his cowboy friends and the red men was catching on and was being elaborated upon. Actah was called upon to take the part of the settler's wife, while Bronco Charley played the part of the settler. This was in addition to her regular duties of appearing in the opening review and in her specialty of daring riding in the roping of cattle which always met with a whirlwind of applause from the audience and performers alike.

Many a head would have been turned with less show of approval, but to Actah's level mind the applause was but a natural consequence, rather than personally inspired adoration.

When her act was finished she rode directly toward the center of the grand stand with all the dash of true horsemanship and when perilously near the spectators she would quickly check her mount, and dolfing her broad brimmed sombrero, pull her horse to the left and gracefully ride away leaving thousands of quickly won and admiring friends while they were shouting and proclaiming her praises.

After the show had settled to daily routine Actah found time, which, had it not been pos-

sible to occupy with new and interesting experiences, would have hung heavy. In the forenoons she visited the exhibit buildings and found the world crowded with possessions about which she had known nothing. She took a launch ride on the lagoons, one evening, as the lights were transforming the cascades into dreamland. The elegantly dressed woman sitting next to Actah gathered her skirts about her so that they might not touch the fringed leather of Actah's dress but Actah did not notice the movement. She only saw the lights upon the water, the beauties of the cascades, the varied greens of grass, shrub and plant as the artificial lights blended with the moon's early rays, ever changing the enchantment of the bewildering scene. From somewhere under one of the many arched bridges could be heard the melodious barytone of a gondolier, as he sang a Venetian love song.

Actah turned quickly and the name "Dick," died upon her lips as she awakened from her dream and realized her surroundings. She had made two round trips in the launch and knew she would be late for the early evening performance.

She left the launch at the Royal Landing

and hurriedly crossed the plaza. She barely had time to mount for the review. As it was, she was compelled to ride a strange pony, as her groom, commonly called, "The Kid," failed to have her own pony ready.

She rode the wicked little rat of a mustang into the arena and as she turned into the line of march he gave a most strenuous exhibition of an ugly disposition. Actah was in no danger of losing her seat, however. It was not her custom of allowing any horse to disturb her, but Bronco Charley sprang to her side and grasped her bridle.

"Let go, Charley, I got her."

"Let me help you, Acta; that animal's killed her man;" and Charley still held the bridle.

"Let go, I say. I don't care how many she's killed. I'm not on her list;" and as the pony gave a wicked lunge Charley loosed his hold, and Actah fairly danced her charge around the arena.

Charley's insistent attendance upon Actah was known and remarked upon. Those who knew Charley best shook their heads and said, "poor girl." The general opinion of the others was that she might do worse.

To all outward appearances Charley's love making had not become annoyingly serious.

He was, nevertheless, most determined and had, long since, decided to become the lord of Checotah.

His riding had become hazardous, well near perilous, so set was he upon claiming Actah's attention through sheer admiration of his skill in the saddle. As he had never come nearer than by word of mouth Actah experienced no uneasiness whatever. She had never considered what course she would adopt should Charley become over industrious in his attentions.

There was an immense throng of spectators the night that Actah was late. After the review, which she danced out to the pony's utter exhaustion and her own satisfaction, she mounted her own thoroughbred and discounted her previous record.

The spectators fairly went wild. With utter abandon, she rode as if her mind actuated and absolutely controlled horse and rider, as indeed it did. Charley looked on completely dazed with admiration, and if he made mistakes that night there were extenuating circumstances.

Following Actah's specialty the arena was cleared and Actah entered the settler's cabin where she was supposed to be preparing the

evening meal while she awaited her settler husband's return from the trail. He entered the arena from the opposite side, his pony traveling slowly but steadily under the heavy load. Charley had been successful that day and carried a buffalo calf hung over his pony's neck just before the saddle. He fired his rifle, saluting his home as he came in sight. Actah opened the door and waved her hand in greeting. Charley rode to the hut and Actah helped him as he swung the calf onto convenient hooks. As Actah entered the cabin Charley hobbled his pony and followed her. Immediately the red men put in an appearance, and while one attempted to run away with the pony others set fire to the hut. Charley and Actah opened fire on the reds from loop holes, but had it not been for the timely arrival of a party of friendly cowboys they would have been lost. The cowboys sent many of the Indians to an imaginary heaven and the others scampering back to their tepees on the opposite side of a high board fence.

During the melee Charley staggered from the cabin and fell just outside the door. While very realistic this act was not part of the program, and there was some little commotion as Charley was carried from the field of action.

As was customary another cowboy fell, early in the fight, near and just in front of the reserved portion of the grand stand. To him his rough, though sympathizing comrades came, while yet the smoke of battle hung heavy over the lower end of the arena.

Their remarks over the body of their dead comrade were unsophisticated but real and true to nature; their actions were natural, graceful and in accord with real grief. There are greater actors in the world than any who have yet trod the histrionic boards and to these uncouth exponents of an art they themselves had never realized, many an eye dimmed and many a heart throbbed admiration. They tenderly raised their dead and placed him over an empty saddle, his head and feet hanging limply on either side. More than one spectator had misgivings so assuredly dead did he appear.

The funeral train moved slowly, solemnly out upon the trail to some lonely spot where —but it is with the living with which we have to deal.

Behind the scenes incidents of real life were being enacted. An impromptu court martial was being held by Old Dave. Actah had been accused of shooting to kill.

The question of her guilt or innocence was to be decided there in the moonlight. If innocent, absolute protection was to be hers; if guilty she would have to take her chances with the law. Bronco Charley had been shot, possibly killed—circumstances pointed directly to Actah. The act had been committed in the cabin. Actah's own revolver had been found there within a few minutes of the tragedy.

Actah would make no statement. She stood silent and self-contained as Old Dave begged her to defend herself. He assured her that the facts could be kept secret but a little while and that if she would speak he would do all he could. There was little doubt but that the police would be on hand at an early moment, and thinking to spur her on to her own defense Old Dave denounced Actah in no uncertain way. He was telling her that a hundred eyes had seen her take deliberate aim and shoot Bronco Charley.

"Hold on father," called Young Dave, as he came into the little group leading two ponies. "Actah did not even see the shooting, although she had every cause to kill that whelp—I was there under the roof of that hut—I couldn't stay away any longer—I crawled in there,

knowing I could see Actah without being seen. I was going back tonight, alone, but I have changed my plans—I go, but not alone."

As Dave finished speaking he offered his hand to Actah who mounted one of the ponies Dave was leading; her own. Dave vaulted into his saddle and together they rode westward away from the blinding lights of Saint Louis out into the soft glow of nature's night light. Actah and Dave.

They left Old Dave wondering, stupefied. Young Dave's actions had been so absolute, so decisive, that not a hand was raised to stay him.

It was Old Dave who devoted himself to the care of Bronco Charlev, to his eventual recovery. The shooting was considered the result of carelessness incident to the average wild west show.

Out along a path two riders were wending their way free as the air that brought to them contentment, peace, happiness. They were man and wife bound for a far western home, one they had before both known and loved. In the years that followed Checotah became widely known for the fame of its stalwart, brave, strong master and its charming mistress. Love ruled that empire; faith made it strong; contentment brought it happiness.

NOWHERE

It is to fate's island—Nowhere,
Over in sorrow's sea,
Many a soul is self-banished,
Never a soul is free.

Why not throw care to the fourwinds?
Why not be happy now,
Forgetting island of Nowhere,
To fate a passing bow?

It is to hearts that are happy,
Happiness will return.
Islands of peace and contentment
Shelter us when we learn.

THE VESTU TRAIL

To the old rock point, the head of the Vestu range, these two had come. They were strange companions; a little girl and a rugged specimen of manhood; both readily recognizable as gypsies by their picturesque dress and browned skins. The little one lay fast asleep, warmed by a cloak and a nearby camp fire. The man approached and gazed upon the sleeping child, and as she stirred he stooped and wrapped the cloak closer to the little form.

They had rested here a few hours—here where the forest nestled back over the trail, here where civilization had crept and wrested from nature a share of her beauty. From this rocky promontory back to the southeast, over the mountains to the lowlands below, lay a waste of virgin forest, uninhabited and untrodden save by those nimble, restless creatures who found a home beneath any sky, the gypsies who sometimes took this wild trail in quest of game or for change of market. Out from the rock to the northwest a new world welcomed the wanderer.

The traveler from the south easily followed

the trail to the old rock; but many have turned back to search for the main trail, supposing they had accidentally taken a by-path to the old view point. It is doubtful if anyone, unless well directed, has ever found an outlet to the trail over the mountain. There was one, however, and but for the one, twenty miles would have to be covered before reaching the sunny valley and the civilization to the north.

Within twenty feet of the camp fire that burned for our wayfarers the mouth of a rocky cavern was hidden by the trees and underbrush. Once within the cavern, and armed with a fearlessness born of firm determination to solve the mysteries of earth's darkest and most lonesome trail, a remarkably crooked descent of two hundred feet in a cavernous journey of half a mile brought the wanderer again to a glimpse of the beauty of daylight, disclosing a startling view of the valley beyond, framed in gigantic masses of solid rock. From the lower exit of the cavern the trail was easily followed down the mountain side and on to the little railroad station that sometimes marked the change in lives; the change from the unfettered freedom of the long trail to the strange freedom of civic liberty.

From the top of the rock the view to the

north repaid the lost traveler unless he was in such haste that he found no beauty in views of scenic grandeur. Far to the left could be traced the glistening surface of the mountain torrent as its waters dashed over precipitous rocks and lost themselves in the quieter shade of the foothills. To the right the snow capped heights of Vestu were brilliant in reflection of the springtime sun. Looking away from the mountains the gentle slopes of undulating lowlands bordered the once turbulent mountain stream, now the river of clear waters, and stretched to a far distant horizon, a realistic dream to the tiller of the soil, an ideal haven to the wearied traveler.

From the edge of the rock it was possible to look down the precipice hundreds of feet upon as rough and rugged a declivity as was ever formed by volcanic upheaval.

After some slight attention to the fire, Jean cleared the brush from the mouth of the cavern, and as he did so the little one awoke, and sang as she pillowed her head on her arm and watched her strange companion. As the first note reached Jean he arose and slowly returned as his little friend finished that exquisite "Ave Maria," the Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana.

"Bernice, where—where did you learn that song?"

Bernice rose as she replied: "My mother sang it to me often. Do you know, papa Jean, in all this time, I mean, since I was taken by those terrible men;—why do you look away? You are not one of them, papa Jean; you are taking me back to my mamma; I have only to sing that song when I first awake, or when I feel sleepy, and I can almost see and hear her as she used to sing me to sleep."

"And when I heard you sing I thought I heard your mother, but I could not see her. Bernice, it is almost time for us to part. In a little while you will take the train over there at the station, and will soon be at home, and I will have kept my promise to your dear mother. We have but a short time here, and I must tell you all the story so that you can tell your mother, that she may know why I have been so long in keeping my promise. Where is you father, Bernice?"

"Why, you are my papa Jean."

"I mean your own papa, little one."

"He died when I was so young I do not remember him. I only remember you, papa Jean."

"Yes, I know, and you will always remem-

ber me, Bernice, when I am far away there in the woods, and you are with your mamma in Cloverdale."

"You are not going back to those people! You are going with me to Cloverdale, and to mamma, and be my papa Jean always."

"If I could; but listen, Bernice. I hardly remember when I first became a gypsy; but that I was not always one, I am certain. Three years ago, some of the more daring men of our tribe determined to steal by Cloverdale and carry you away and hold you until a large sum of money should be offered for your return. I had always succeeded in absenting myself from such expeditions, but in this one I was commanded and forced, much against my will, to participate. Your capture was easily accomplished, but the ruffian, Gonza, who picked you up handled you so roughly that I protested and was struck to earth, and left for dead. I am almost frenzied when I think how those with whom I had lived nearly, if not quite, all my years, were eager to take my life. From the moment of that frightful, death-dealing blow, for many weeks it seems, I laid in a stupor, and would have lost my life had it not been for the care and attention of your kind mother. As soon as she learned

of my injury I was carried, at her command, into her home, and there through the skill of surgeons and your untiring mother's care, I again found life, but with mixed feelings of contentment, fear and sorrow. Sorrow, on account of the fact that I had aided in separating your good mother and her dearest one, her child. Fear, as life held for me a constant presentiment of loss of mind, as I suffered frequent lapses of consciousness which seemed to me moments of insanity; but contentment when I lay semi-conscious and heard your mother sing as she changed the bandages, or performed the many thoughtful attentions that contributed to my comfort. Many hours, in those long days of convalescence, I watched her as she passed to and fro, and when she sang that song, the one you sang just now, I seemed to dream of a happy home of long ago, some place where nature bestowed her quietest shade, where loved ones breathed words of comfort, and a mother watched over her little ones. In time I came to a full realization of the debt I owed your mother, and as I grew stronger I felt that I should not longer remain under her hospitable roof, but, if possible, rejoin my tribe, and at least, and at any risk, return you to your mother's loving care."

Bernice rested her hand trustingly on Jean's shoulder while he sat on a log, as she said: "And just think, day after tomorrow I—we will be home!"

"Home, Bernice? Yes, you will be home, home at Cloverdale, and I will be home somewhere in the forest where a mind may wander and be a menace to no one."

As Jean ceased speaking his hands sought his head as if to counteract the effect of some terrible picture conjured in memory. Bernice shook her head, taking one of his hands in hers.

"One day, Bernice, I remember, it was in the late afternoon. I could see the sun's reflection in the little lake of Cloverdale, ever changing in its brilliant hues, and as constant as the sun's own marking of the change from day to night, I requested your mother to add one more cause of gratitude on my part, and tell me in what way I might most surely and absolutely repay her the debt I owed. She looked at me long and intently as she said: 'Go to your people, bring back my child;' and then, she told me how she had seen and heard my protests to the manner in which you were handled, Bernice. She had seen the striking of the blow that would have killed me had it

not been for her prompt action in having me cared for, and while every effort had been unsuccessfully made to secure your return, she had never given up hope, but depended upon my return to health, as she said to me: 'Every hope, my good friend Jean, is centered in you. If you owe me anything the return of my little Bernice will cancel all obligations. The moment I saw you fall, I thought, there is a man's life to save, and for his life he will willingly return that dearest life in all this world to me, the life of Bernice, my little girl.' And then she said: 'What ties have you with a people who have held your life so lightly, that cannot and should not be broken, that could hold you from conferring this great favor?' 'None,' I cried, 'I can find them. I knew every trail and footpath from the most southern camp near the great water to the northern lookout of Vestu; but it will take time. I will go tonight. Look for a message from me every quarter of the year until your little one returns.' As her grateful eyes glistened in their speaking radiance of renewed hope, she cautioned me in most solicitous manner to care for myself, and above all not to allow excitement in any manner to control my actions. It was then I knew she realized

the danger of my injury. While I had never spoken of it, there was one incident in my convalescence that worried me, one which I tried to keep secret, but from her caution and her manner, I knew she knew and feared."

"One morning she had recounted to me the story of your abduction, and my long unconsciousness, and being hardly strong enough to throw the burden of the truth from my mind, the story and the hallucinations of a fevered imagination caused me to jump from my couch. I knew no more of what then happened until the sweetest voice that I had ever heard sang a strangely fascinating bit of melody that at first sounded so far away, so dreamily soothing, and so gradually bringing back the senses that all were quickening with the musical rythm. It was the Intermezzo. When I became fully conscious your mother was watching me intently while she sang. Several of the servants were leaving the library, having been attracted, doubtless, by the music. When I was left alone I noticed that the heavy draperies of one of the windows of the library, in which I was reclining, had been closely drawn. I arose, and stepping to the window, parted the draperies, and found the glass shattered. This seemed

strange, as I had, not an hour before, watched through that same window, a robin carrying straws to its nest in the apple tree.

"According to my promise I left Cloverdale at once, carrying with me the earnest God-speed of your mother, and leaving with her, in deepest gratitude, my most sacred promise that only death could forestall the redemption of that promise.

"Seven months had passed, and I had sent two short messages to Cloverdale before I found, one night, the camp where I feared and hoped I would find you. My people were sullenly surprised. But few words passed between us. No one seemed to care for my long absence, or my return. Even Gonza took a pipe of tobacco from my pouch. I did not ask for you, but my eyes rested on every face, my ears caught every sound. I went to sleep that night not knowing what my next message to Cloverdale would contain.

"On the following morning I saw a little girl carrying water, and you remember that I spoke to you, and lifting your burden and you, I carried you to the camp. On the way I asked you if you knew a place called Cloverdale."

"And I answered, 'Yes,' papa Jean, and then I cried."

"And I cautioned you not to tell the others, and told you I would find some way to take you back to your mamma. You remember how we tried to leave the camp that cold winter's night, how it all ended in failure, and I lost the confidence of the tribe, and you were guarded more closely than ever. In all the time since then, I have sent messages to your mother at regular intervals reassuring her of your health, and that no opportunity for escape would be lost. When the opportunity came a month ago we slipped away, and while it has been a long journey we are safe and happy, little one. They cannot find us now. Bernice, do you see that rock? Come, look down. From this point to the rocks below is several hundred feet. It would be far better to jump from this rock to certain death, than to be recaptured by the tribe. For you that would mean death, or a life worse than death, and for me it would mean death.

"Bernice, tell your mother, tell her I have kept my promise, tell her that in every song in nature, the wind in the tree tops of the forest, the ripple of the waters running over the rocks, the many vibrant notes of the birds, but bring back the memories of Cloverdale.

"Tell her that the life of the treacherous

gypsy is not the life for Jean. Oh! If memory could bring some little clue to that earlier life. If some one, or something, could bring me to the tender caress of a loving mother, a home, a life of peace. Gonza, Gonza, I can almost see him now. I can see his teeth and feel the ugly blow. Gonza! I can hear his words as he glared over me: 'He's dead. Dead men don't talk.' What could I say? It was for her sake I did not take him by the throat and strangle the truth from him. For her—for her—for——."

As Jean rose his face betrayed a horrible truth. Just on the eve of the successful fruition of a long deferred hope, madness replaced the gentleness of one of nature's noblemen, as with one terrible laugh he called "Gonza, Gonza," turning from one cliff to another, "You have come to take her back. She shall not go. Gonza, demon, she shall not go!"

Bernice called "Papa Jean," and tried to catch his hand; as she did so Jean, in his madness, tore the sleeve from his coat, and picking Bernice from the ground ran to the edge of the rock, and swinging her above his head, was about to throw her over the cliff, as he cried: "Back, back!"

Just at the moment, Bernice in mid-air, hovering between life and death, sang:

"Ave Marie, hear my cry!
Oh guide my path, where no harm,
No harm is nigh."

It was the same old song. Hardly did the first note reach the ear of the frantic Jean than his arms trembled, and he slowly returned the singing Bernice to earth as gently as a mother lays to rest her sleeping babe.

He kneeling, was clinging to her as she sang the last note, when she quickly sprang away from him.

"Go, go, Bernice, enter the cavern. Fear not. I will not follow. Keep close to the left wall, be careful, do not fall, and in a few minutes you will see the sunlight again. Follow the trail to the station; the train will be there in an hour. Tell your mother I have kept my promise. Goodbye."

Bernice turned to the cavern, and then came quickly back to Jean, as she said:

"Papa Jean, come. I need you and you need me. Come."

Kissing her hand he rose and led her into the cavern, and a new life replaced the old.

THE MOONGLADE

The moon comes from its hiding,
Behind the distant cloud.
The sea is yet abiding
Enwrapped in nightly shroud;

Except the silver beaming;
Within the sabled walls,
That trembles, glistens, teeming
Whene'er the moonbeam falls.

The course is straight though surging,
All hemmed on either side.
The night's dense blackness verging,
As 'twould its darkness hide.

Let thought run out the mazes,
Try not its flight to stave.
Grasp all the changing phases
And touch each cresting wave.

Is it the path of glory
That leads but to the grave?
Be it a truer story,
Some wanderer to save.

The poet finds the gladness
In moonglade's changing light;
He also feels the madness
Diffused by orb of night.

The voice of One is speaking,
In tones of sweetness rare;
For His own children seeking
May find all lessons there.

He who rejects the knowing
Of God, and will not try,
Reaps not the love that's flowing,
Nor truths that give the lie.

The optimist is dreaming;
The art sublime he feels;
All love on him is beaming;
To One divine he kneels.

The cynic stands and gazes
As in a moment's doubt.
No scene his mind amazes;
All beauty's put to rout.

The misers come all trembling
To see, if nothing more,
The myriad lights resembling
The metals they adore.

The youth comes singing, sadly,
A song of love's sweet lore,
To find the glade gives gladly
His own dear *Eleanor.

The moon will send its greeting,
Though distant we may be,
Along the waters fleeting,
The same to you and me.

*Eleanor; signifying light.—Webster.

A CHRISTMAS MASQUE

"Draw your arms far into your coat sleeves, John, and the cuffs will be hardly noticeable," said the officer as he escorted John Moore from the county jail to the penitentiary, a convicted criminal. It was a kindly word on the part of the officer, as his prisoner was apt to be seen and recognized by many acquaintances.

John Moore had dreaded this ordeal of his conviction almost as much as the parting of a few minutes before, when he was allowed to say "good bye" to his wife and their two boys. Like all such scenes, the heart-strings were tense to the point of snapping—but why attempt description? Enough it was, when the loyal, trusting wife removed her wedding ring from her hand and said: "Wear it, John, for the next two years; then,—why,—then, John you will bring it back to me."

John Moore's trial had been a short and decisive victory for the prosecution. He protested his innocence, but could not disprove the evidence. The court was lenient in view of the excellent reputation of the accused, and

the minimum sentence of two years in the state's prison put an end to the trial.

It was one of those offenses against justice of which many men are guilty and go unpunished, and where, it seems, one man suffers enough for all.

There were few who saw and recognized the guarded man, and they felt only sympathy.

John Moore did not believe in the use of circumstantial evidence in the conviction for crime. He not only knew his own innocence, but he had circumstantial reasons for believing that he could name the man who was guilty, though he knew his reasons were not evidence. There was only one other man who could, through any possible chance, be guilty; but that man, Jesse Walters, was so far above him, as reckoned by the social steps of life, that only evidence of most tangible form could convict.

How many, many nights he lay in the dreary prison cell running over in his mind the circumstances and his connection with the crime, until, one day, one of his wife's letters told of a communication she had, the day before, received. It read:

"Mrs. John Moore:

"Dear Madam:—Knowing something of your misfortune and desiring to make, if possible, your burden lighter, I have deposited to your order, two thousand dollars in the First National Bank. Sincerely trusting that John Moore's wife and sons may be materially benefited by this action, I beg to remain to you

"Unknown."

"Unknown," yes, to his wife and sons; but to John Moore those letters "u-n-k-n-o-w-n," spelled "Jesse Walters," and without loss of time he wrote to his wife, begging her not to touch a penny of the money unless she, or the boys, became in actual need. He pointed out to her the fact that either the donor was the kindest-disposed friend in the world, who need not withhold his own name, or that he was the guilty one for whom she, and those she loved, were suffering; in which case, there was every reason for withholding his name.

During those two years a Christmas came and passed, and the greatest joy it brought to John Moore's loved ones was the realization that time was passing and there remained but little more than a year before the return of the husband and father.

As the second year dragged to an end, John Moore decided that he could never return to his home city. He could not meet the friends of the past and be made to feel that at least some of them were doubtful of his innocence. He had decided that he would not communicate his plans to his wife. He felt sure that, after he had succeeded, she would see the wisdom of his action.

He had been told that his good conduct during his imprisonment had earned two months' time,—the best two months of his life,—and he would be released the middle of December. He found it hard waiting until he could write the good news; but when that was possible, he felt it would be better to wait until he was free and on his way to the west before he acquainted his wife with the knowledge of his shortened term. The silent call of her loyal patience, the thought of the boys, was hard enough to overcome. He knew that one letter from her, after learning of his early release, would deter his action and bring him back, and God knew, it was for them he was going away.

At last the great day came. He was free,—free to go home. "Home," what a word! How it called to him; but it was home where

he was going. To a home—unknown—but home, out there in the beckoning west. It would not be long until he could have them with him, and then—

He would mail the letter he had written to his wife and boys and take the next train to the west. Just as he was about to drop the letter, a thought stopped the action. Putting the letter into his pocket instead of into the mail box, he hurriedly made his way to the station and purchased a ticket for—"home."

He could not go to the west without first seeing those loved ones, even if they did not see him.

It was nearing evening when he reached the city, and as he crossed a street he came face to face with a man, one of the Volunteers of America, dressed in the guise of Santa Claus, who, standing there upon the street, greeted the little folks as they passed, and accepted the contributions that were to make some of earth's less fortunate ones happy on the coming Christmas Day. Here was a way. In such a dress John Moore could see and recognize and not be recognized in turn.

He spoke quietly with the Santa Claus, who gave him directions. It was a short walk to the Armory. Once there, his proffered services

were accepted and John Moore hastily clothed himself in wig, mask and coat of the prince of Christmastide. John Moore mentally noted the contrast of his late apparel with his present garb of good cheer and happiness.

There was no time to be lost. He was safe, and he hurried to the street corner nearest his home.

John Moore had returned,—almost, but not quite. He stood on the corner near the cottage which held all that was dear to him. Strangers came, dropped small coins into his pot, spoke a kindly word, and passed. Children stopped and gazed on him in wonder and expectancy. Santa Claus extended his hand, and as a little one took it, he asked, as he had heard the other Santa ask:. "And what would you like to have Santa Claus bring to you?"

"A doll, roller skates, typewriter, wash tub and wash board and a new dress for mamma," rattled the child, when she ran away to tell her mother that she had seen Santa Claus and shook hands with him. The eyes of J. M. Santa Claus followed the little miss and he was only brought back to his duty to the army when a man spoke kindly to him and dropped a bill into the pot. He was Jesse Walters.

As Walters passed up the street he glanced

at the home of John Moore and his hands gave a spasmodic clinch. John Moore saw, but his thoughts were quickly changed as a little fellow came out of the Moore home and, seeing the waiting Santa Claus, rushed back to the door, calling: "O mamma, come and see the Santa Claus. He's right out here. Come on."

John Moore heard his elder son's voice. How he wanted to go to him,—to them. For their sakes,—for them,—he must carry out his masquerade. They must not know.

Mrs. Moore and her sons came out to see the Santa Claus. After she had placed a small coin in the pot, John Moore steeled himself and, stooping, touched the hand of his son, and in a voice choked with emotion, asked: "And what would you like to have Santa Claus bring to you?"

"The manly little fellow looked intently, as if trying to see beyond the mask, as he said, simply, "My papa."

John Moore's hand moved quickly. As it did so the wife saw and recognized the ring upon his finger—her wedding ring. Trembling, she asked: "Is it you, John?"

Could mortal mind stand more? The mask was thrown off. There, in the street, John

Moore gathered his own. As they stood, all tears and smiles, Jesse Walters returned that way.

"John Moore! Home again! Well, this is good. By the way, John, I have spoken to the other members of the firm, and they have agreed with me that you shall not only have your old position, but a better one. Of course you will come back."

With one hand clasped in those of his wife, and his other arm about his two boys, John Moore said: "Then it was—you. Mr. Walters, if I were guilty, you would never make this offer. Jesse Walters, of all men, you know my innocence. There is only one thing you can do for these loved ones, and me. I do not want your positon. Your money has not been touched. I want these boys cleared."

"You are right, John Moore. Pride and opportunity made the wrong possible. I thought I had done all I could to right you, John, but I haven't. I will, though,—I will."

"It was a fervent "God bless you," that escaped Mrs. Moore's lips, and John Moore took the proffered hand of Jesse Walters.

The little fellow looked up sweetly, as he said: "Santa Claus did bring my papa."

MARBLES

I can recall the games I played,
When, in the happy days gone by,
I loitered, and so late I stayed,
That mother met me with a sigh.
Of games I played from morn till night,
At marbles I could beat the lot.
They heard me yell, "You knuck down tight,
Fen hunchin's, now-ow, it's my shot."

I went to school? Well, I guess yes,
And got my lessons, too, you bet;
For play made not my studies less,
So, work I would till school was let;
And then, so long as it was light
To get my "dakes" upon the spot,
I used to yell, "You knuck down tight,
Fen hunchin's, now-ow, it's my shot."

'Twas baseball now, 'twas football then;
'Twas shinny, played by dull and smart.
'Twas every game for two to ten;
But marbles won my boyish heart.
And when I played, I thought it right,
The other fellow should, why not,
Just play like me and knuck down tight,
Fen hunchin's, now-ow, it's my shot.

In kiting time 'twas fun 'twould bring;
'Twas like a politician's pull
To have something upon a string,
And realize my heart grow full.
For forty "spots" I'd trade my kite,
And then for game I was red hot,
For I could play at, "Knuck down tight,
Fen hunchin's, now-ow, it's my shot."

A PICTURE SWEETHEART

Florence Drew sat in the library and study of Father Piere waiting for an opportunity of speaking with him face to face. Two minutes in that solitude almost changed her mind, and if she could have left without being seen, she would have done so.

Father Piere entered as if he were aware of her presence. He bowed and placed on his desk the papers he was carrying. He slowly turned and spoke kindly:

"You wish to see me?"

Florence rose from the chair as she replied: "I wish to speak with you."

The Father looked up quickly as she spoke. "For the first time?"

"No, Father."

"Ah, I recognize your voice."

"I am glad. It will make what I have to say so much easier."

Thoughtfully the Father replied: "Yes. The first time two months ago; again, one month later, and again, last night. Your heart is heavy."

"Yes. The Father has said that I must regret and forget."

"Forget, yes, forget."

"It is impossible. Father, even with the help that you have given me, it is impossible."

"You must think differently and it will not be so impossible."

"Death would bring forgetfulness. Is it wrong to die? Would death save me?"

"The thought is sin, my child."

"I have not dared think that thought, though more than once it has forced its way into my mind, and there seems no other way to forget."

"You are young. He is a Catholic?"

"No."

"Protestant?"

"Yes."

"Baptized?"

"I think so."

"And so full of guilt. What is his name, did you say?"

"I did not say."

"You must protect yourself. You must protect others. It is a duty you owe the church."

"Father, I only speak his name in prayer."

"I must hear you pray."

"I shall never tell his name."

"My child, you do not realize his guilt."

"Father, he is guiltless."

"Guiltless?"

"Yes, and I love him."

"My child, the state of your mind is proof of his guilt. A guilt that is a menace to society and to the church."

"He is guilty of no wrong."

"Must I remind you of your confession?"

"My confession?"

"Yes; you said you loved him and that you were guilty of—"

"That I was guilty. I,—alone. He needs no confession."

"I do not understand."

"You shall. Two years—about two years ago—I saw two pictures of a man. To me they were the cause of wild, sweet thoughts. The pictures were in the possession of a very dear girl friend of mine. Question after question I asked her until I was sure she thought me silly. She knew him and, fortunately, could answer my questions readily. I tried to beg from her both pictures. She let me have one of them. I slept that night with his picture under my pillow. I dreamed of him. I dreamed he stood beside me while my mother

held my hand. He stooped and kissed me. Oh, if I had never wakened from that dream. Days passed and I put myself in his way. We met,—oh, no matter the excuse my mind devised. I found him as I had imagined him,—a clean, strong man; one to be loved, and Father, he was, and is loved. Those were happy days until in conversation one day he mentioned his wife. Surely it was not his fault that I was not made acquainted with the fact sooner; but, Father, it could have made no difference except in my making his acquaintance. I might not have done that,—and I might. After seeing him as often as possible in the almost two years that followed, I finally realized that I was guilty of sin, a depth of sin that can only be expressed by that most terrible of words—. I came to confession. With a heart full I knew I must confess all. Father, I did confess all. I was guilty of the thought of sin. There has never been a minute in all this time that I would not willingly have gone to him and taken him from—from the arms of his wife, if need be. He does not know. I came to you only after I had decided that he should never know my thoughts, and now the world seems dead and I wish that I were dead."

"Do not wish that, my child. Let me help you, not so much as a priest, but as a friend. Let me confess to you."

"Father!"

"Listen. While preparing for the priesthood I met a girl. She was beautiful, accomplished, sweet. She was everything that man could appreciate. I loved her and could not tell her. I, too, dreamed. Asleep and awake I dreamed. I tried to find some way until my brain was in a whirl. One day I decided to take fate in my own hands. I sought her and begged from her, her picture. My obligations would not let me do more. A thousand times I have tried to burn—tear—destroy—that picture."

"Yes, Father."

"I could not. A picture has been my sweetheart. A picture—a picture has been my wife. I go to it in my sorrows and in my joys. I find in it the sweetest thoughts, the dearest companionship of my life. I never knew a mother. No ideal, no being was ever cherished in a man's life as my picture sweetheart is in mine. I imagine her now as grown grey and sweeter with the years. I have not seen her; I have known nothing of her for over twenty years. One night I dreamed she had

found her earthly mate. Another time, I was resting in the afternoon, I dreamed a terrible storm had broken and my mind was tortured more than I can tell, when suddenly peace and contentment followed the storm and as I slept, I saw her lying in a bower of roses. Her face reflected the glories of the parting day, and by her side a babe was nestled close to the mother's breast. What more could I ask? I sought my picture to thank her for that blessing."

"You still love her, Father?"

"Selfishness is pain. I love her and I love him and I love the babe. Some day, maybe, I may see them all."

"Father, I think I see my way."

"May you, my child. It is not a hard way. You have his picture. Will you take my advice?"

"Advice, Father?"

"Yes, child. Return his picture."

"You still have your picture, Father."

"Yes, child, and no earthly vow will ever take it from me."

"Nor mine, Father. May I see your picture?"

"May I see yours?"

"Father!"

"Of course not; but you shall see mine."

He unlocked a drawer in the desk and removed a fire-proof box from which he took the portrait. He held it so she might see, as he said: "My picture."

Florence looked eagerly, and recognizing the picture, exclaimed: "It is my mother."

"Your mother?"

"Yes." She quickly unfastened a locket which hung at her neck and showed the picture it contained. "See; my mother."

He took the locket from her outstretched hand and gazed upon the picture. "The same. What have I done?"

"Then your dream was true. I was that baby."

"And your father, child; may I see him?"

"My father is dead, but you may see mother."

"No." The word sounded almost harsh. He looked again at the picture in the locket and compared it with his own. He looked at Florence. "I can trust you, child. Never, no word?"

"You can trust me, Father."

"Here, your locket." He handed back the locket, quickly replaced his picture in the strong box, which he locked in the desk, secured his hat and coat, and said: "Come, then I will see her—only see—her again."

V-I-O-L-E-T

'Tis said the violet but symbolizes love—
A symbol truer far than cooing dove.
No other flower has been so aptly named;
No other flower will be so broadly famed.

The "L," though fourth before, is first this time;
The "O" from third to second falls in line;
The "V" from first to third, you surely see;
The "E" completes the word, L—O—V—E.

These letters out, what others may be found?
The "I," the "T," these two; pass love around.
Just see how much the violet contains,
L-o-v-e is dropped, yet "it" remains.

MY YACHT

To sail the briny deep
  Has been my one "ambish"—
This secret, I'll not keep:
  I also like to fish.
And now I own a yacht,
  For it is sure I am
I own the Rubaiyat
  Of old Omar Khayyam.

WILD ROSES

If you have never read Arthur McLean Evan's delightful short stories, do so when you have the opportunity. He writes to entertain, and his stories are masterpieces of constructive skill and imagery. He resides in the Arch City in Beekman street, in what he calls his forty-story house. Of course, the building is not of that extreme height; in fact, it is one of those charming single story, rambling structures set back among the trees. The income from his book, entitled, "Forty Stories," provided the luxurious home, so, it really was a forty-story house.

Arthur McLean Evans had been through the mill. From youth he had been alert, active, a reasonable student and a real worker. Even before leaving school, and for a time afterwards, he saw service with the large dailies of his city. Trivial incidents of his newspaper life became in later years wonderful romances. For years he had studied the public taste and had felt the public pulse. Knowledge, imagination and work did the

rest. Beekman street, in fact the entire city, was proud of its author resident, and the forty-story house was a landmark.

The demands upon the author's time were many. Four and five hours of the morning were devoted to work, and the late afternoons often found him deeply engaged. He arose from his desk, carefully gathered together his notes and laid them away for the day. He changed his coat, put on an old wide brimmed hat, picked up a cane and walked out into the air. Instantly, as some men learn to do, he put aside the cares of the day and sought the relaxation and consequent rest that the out of doors affords. Since success had been his, he had found his happiness, peacefully and without seeking the excitement that is supposed to exhilarate. He strolled among the trees. He breathed the pure air. He stopped walking to listen to the cheerful song of a bird. He thought of the children who would soon be home from school. He approached the street slowly as he hummed a favorite air. He noticed a girl dressed in grey who stood on the walk. She looked up and down the street, apparently perplexed. Turning, she saw the author and, bowing demurely, asked: "Can you tell me, please, where I can find Mr.

Evans? I am sure it is on this street, but I am told his house is very high."

The author smiled as he replied: "I am Mr. Evans, but, as you see, my house is not very, not even moderately high. Will you come in?"

"Yes, thank you," and she entered by the gate and together they walked to the house, talking as they walked.

"Mr. Miller referred me to you."

"Yes?"

"You see, Mr. Evans, I am, well, I can hardly say, an author."

"Indeed. A regular competitor?"

"Oh, no, sir. Mr. Miller read one of my stories and said that he was sure that you would gladly help me. He said that you knew all about it, and that you would hear my story and make some valuable suggestions."

"I am afraid our mutual friend is a flatterer."

"Then you cannot—I mean, you will not help me?"

"If I can, I will," and he smiled encouragingly as he said: "Come into the library."

After they were comfortably seated, she tried to speak and hesitated, somewhat confused. "O Mr. Evans, I forgot to introduce myself. I am Miss Ward."

"Miss Ward. That will look well on a title page."

"Yes, sir. Will you take the paper?" She held out a few well thumbed sheets.

Noting her evident embarrassment, he thought to put her at her ease by asking: "How old are you, Miss Ward?"

"Almost seventeen."

"Rather young for a novelist. Your parents are living?"

"My mother is, and I have a little sister. I don't have much time for writing. You see, I work."

"Writing is work."

"Not with me."

"You are fortunate."

"I suppose so. You see, since father died I have not been able to go to school. I have been working for Mr. Miller, addressing envelopes and folding circulars. It's pretty hard work, if you have ever tried it."

The author nodded his head as if at some former time he had worked at such drudgery.

"And then, there is so much to do around the house. Sometimes I feel that I really shouldn't take the time to try to write, but I do want to be more than I am—like you."

Mr. Evans smiled, but the thought ran

through his mind wonderingly whether he was more than he was.

"It is only after my little sister is asleep that I can possibly find time for the work I love. Of course, I love my little sister, and my mother, too. I do all I can to help them, but if I only could have some of my manuscripts accepted—." The thought was too much for her. It was a minute before she could continue. "One of the very best stories I ever wrote I sent to a magazine, and I guess I forgot to enclose postage for its return; at least, I never got it back. I have tried to write that story again, but I have never succeeded. I sent this one away and it was just returned to me last Monday. Will you read it? It is not long."

She offered the manuscript, but the author suggested that she read it to him.

"I am not a very good reader, but I will do my best."

While she had been talking she had run over the pages of her manuscript and a leaf had accidentally dropped to the floor. She picked up and replaced the stray leaf as she said: "The title is just 'Evangeline.' That is the name of the lady. I will try to read it so you will understand." After coughing slightly she commenced to read:

"The snow flakes fell—."

"You won't laugh, will you, Mr. Evans? If you laugh, I'm sure I'll cry."

"It is not a humorous story, then?"

"Oh, no, sir, it is very serious. I expect that will be one of your criticisms. But I can't help it. I write as I feel."

"That is the way to do," and with such encouragement she read "Evangeline."

"The snow flakes fell through the trees and the beautiful violet eyed Evangeline stood at the gorgeous draped window and sighed for her absent lover, and the warmth within made the snow much colder in her heart. She did not have no dishes to wash as she was very rich and her servants did such things. The fire burned brightly in the beautiful old fire place and a huge mastiff lay on a beautiful bear skin rug before the fire which her friend had given her for Christmas. Hers was a very happy home. Her mother had been dead for a number of years and her father was a very busy man down to his office where he looked after all the money. Her little sister Gertrude, which they called Gerty for short was one of those dear little things which did not take much trouble to take care of for she seemed to miss her dear mother so greatly

that she did not have time for much else. Oftentimes Evangeline carried her baby sister by the hour just because she loved her so dearly, and then they would sit down together and talk of the days of long ago. Evangeline told her baby sister everything. She was asleep now, but that very morning Evangeline had taken Gerty in her plump arms and told her of her great love for Reginald who was coming to woo her and the little baby smiled just as if she understood and approved. She did not know that when her loving sister went away on her wedding journey across the ocean that she would be left to the tender mercies of a nurse who would not love her as her dear sister did."

"Mr. Evans, when I wrote that, the tears just streamed down my face. I can hardly read it now."

"It is affecting," and the good man settled back in his chair for the continuation of the story.

"Oh, do you think so? Thank you, thank you."

The word of so famous an author meant much to the writer of "Evangeline," and she proceeded with the reading.

"Evangeline was in distress. She walked

among the flowers and tried to think of some way to pass the tedious time while her absent lover was away. She stooped and picked a wild rose blooming in the garden, just as an automobile drew up to the curb across the street. She thought at first that Reginald had come to take her for a spin in the park but it was the doctor calling upon a sick patient across the way. The rose she had plucked she daintily fixed in her beautiful blonde hair as she tried to decide what answer she should give him when Reginald should come for her answer which she had promised to give him when he should come for his an—." She hesitated and then asked: "May I take your pencil? Thank you. That second, 'should come for his answer,' is unnecessary." She crossed out the offending phrase. The author nodded approval, and she continued:

"How could she ever leave her dear little baby sister? How could she refuse the answer Reginald so much desired? He was such a dear boy and then he was very rich, how could she refuse him? But there was that dear little baby sister to be left to the tender mercies of strangers. Surely hers was a sore conflict between love and duty. While she was debating these momentous questions she heard a

soft footstep behind her and she looked up into the loving eyes of Reginald."

"I think that is a very strong climax," and she looked up for the author's approval.

Evidently he did not understand, for he allowed the interruption to pass unnoticed.

" 'Dearest Evangeline, I have came for my answer as I said I would. Oh, keep me not in any more suspense.'

"Evangeline fell upon the neck of her ardent lover and shed bitter tears for how could she marry him and leave her dear little baby sister to the tender mercies of—of others?

"He kissed her rose bud mouth many times and it was many minutes before he could speak. When he did speak it was in a voice quivering with emotion as he said: 'D-dearest E-evangeline, d-do n-not g-give m-me y-your a-answer n-now.' " She stopped reading to ask: "Is that the way to write emotion?"

"It does very well."

"See what a noble man Reginald was for this was his answer: 'I can wait. I have waited this long. I can and will wait until you say that you will be mine.'

"And then she said: 'O Reginald, I do want to say what you want me to say, but there is

my little baby sister, what, O what will become of her? I just cannot forsake her for,—not even for you Reginald.'

"Reginald, with more emotion, replied: 'W-what c-can w-we d-do?'

"And then she said: 'I guess that you will have to wait through the tedious years until Gerty grows up.'

"Reginald then spoke brightly and said: 'And marry Gerty?'

"Evangeline cryed a bitter cry as she said: 'Reginald, how could you?'

"And then he said: 'There, there, dearest, don't cry. I did not mean nothing. I suppose I can wait, wait to the end of the world for you Evangeline to be my wife. Now you must be happy. Let us walk among the flowers and think and talk of the happy days to come when you and I will have no more trouble.' He stooped and plucked a rose which he placed in her hair to replace the one which had wilted in her golden hair. They were very happy these two as they strolled hand in hand among the flowers in the garden and he said to her:

" 'Why can't we elope, dearest? I will take you far away and your little baby sister will never know. We will go in my automobile.

You can put Gerty to sleep and then we will fly.'

"And then she said in a quavering voice: 'I cannot, O Reginald, I cannot,' so he talked to her of other things.

"And then he said: 'As I was taking a spin in my automobile this morning I found Gus Hayes and Miss Edmiston. His automobile had broken down and there they were. I didn't feel a bit sorry for Gus for he is always acting so smart but there was Miss Edmiston so I just took her home in my automobile. That is what made me so late. Gus never even thanked me. We had an awful nice ride. I really never knew her until today. She is one of the prettiest girls I ever saw. I think I will take her for another ride this afternoon.'

"Evangeline was not of a jealous nature so she said through her clenched teeth: 'Far be it from me, Reginald, to criticise you in any particular but do you think that it is proper for you to be engaged to one girl and take another riding in your automobile? I will give you my answer right now. I don't like you and I never did like you. I will never marry you. O Reginald, how could you, how could you?'

"That was too much for Reginald and he cried: 'Do not say that, Evangeline, do not say that. I have never really loved any other woman. Evangeline, take back them cruel words. I love you, Evangeline and only you. Come and fly with me now.'

"Evangeline looked up through her tears as she said: 'O Reginald, do you mean it?'

"And he said: 'You know I mean it Evangeline.'

"And then she said: 'What in the world will we do about Gerty?' She jumped up and down joyfully as she said: 'Oh, I know. We can take her with us, can't we Reginald?'

"And then Reginald said: 'Why, of course we can. Why didn't we think of that sooner?'

"They went into the house and Reginald kissed Evangeline and Evangeline kissed Reginald and the preacher came and married them and Reginald never took Miss Edmiston riding in his automobile any more and Evangeline was very happy and Gerty did not have to be left to the tender mercies of strangers any more.

FINIS"

"That is the end of Evangeline, Mr. Evans. I hope you liked it. And it is all spelled cor-

rectly. You can see for yourself. I looked up every word in the dictionary."

The author leaned back in his chair. He felt the weight of the problem before him. He knew he should and would tell the aspiring authoress the truth, but just how much of the truth to tell was the question. He spoke slowly and kindly:

"Miss Ward, do you realize how very many authors there are in the world?"

She looked up shyly. "You mean like me?"

"Not exactly, Miss Ward. There are so many all together that it is very necessary for anyone to have at command every possible advantage in order to prove successful."

"You mean, I cannot write?"

"I did not say that. Miss Ward, through the suggestion of Mr. Miller, you have come to me for help."

"Yes, sir."

"You say that you have been working for Mr. Miller. Are you not working for him now?"

"No, sir. Mr. Miller's work is all finished. He has promised to help me find some other work to do."

"How would you like to work for me, learn

to use the typewriter and help me write my stories for awhile?"

"You mean, go into partnership with you? Is 'Evangeline' that good?"

The author's heart was strong and he did not faint, but he smiled faintly, saying: "Not just exactly a partnership. I shall pay you for your work as Mr. Miller did, and through experience we will hope that you will improve in your use of language so that you will some day have some of your very own manuscripts accepted by the magazines. Why, child, what are you doing?"

While he was speaking, his full meaning seemed to dawn on her mind, for she tore "Evangeline" into strips. In reply to his question, she sobbed: "I know, now, what you think of 'Evangeline'; but Mr. Evans, don't think that I do not appreciate your kindness. I will work hard to please you." A smile showed through the tears as she thanked him again and again for his generous offer.

"Some day you will rewrite 'Evangeline,' and you and I will both be very proud of her."

"Oh, do you think so?"

"I am sure. If you will come tomorrow at eight-thirty we will go to work." The author opened the door and his newly engaged assist-

ant left, thanking him for his generosity and kindness. He closed the door and slowly walked to the window, where he stood watching the girl while she almost ran to take the good news to her mother. Half aloud he said: "Well, I made that story end happily. I am glad I did not tell her that when the snow fell through the trees it should blast the wild rose buds in the garden."

A SUNBURNED NOSE

With the glories of the setting sun across the dell,
And the beauty of the hillside where the shadows fell,
As the hot and sultry day came to its humid close,
Did mosquitoes ever bite you on a sunburned nose?

Your good health's the secret and real charm of happy life,
For it helps your disposition and avoids all strife.
You'd not kick about your headaches and corns on your toes
If mosquitoes ever bit you on a sunburned nose.

Oh, the doctor and his medicines can cure all ills.
He will do it with his liquids and his funny pills.
He can neutralize the hurt of all chronic woes
But mosquito bites when bitten on a sunburned nose.

A PULLMAN PORTER

He went aboard the Pullman sleeper Longshot at three-thirty-seven and three-fourths P. M. The train pulled out at three-thirty-eight. He had just had an hour, between trains, in the Western metropolis, in which to make sundry needful purchases. There was no mistaking the fact that he was a stranger in a strange land. He walked, in entering the car, as if he owned something. He wore his gold-rimmed nose glasses as if he were unreasonably sure that he knew something. While not exactly faultlessly dressed, he was, at least figuratively, spotless. That was out of his beaten path of custom, for his very spotlessness disturbed him. He even refused to allow a fly a resting place on his cuff.

After the Pullman porter had deposited the traveling bag on the forward seat of number seven, the gentleman polished and poised his glasses and surveyed the car and its occupants. He found no one taking a like interest in himself, consequently that pastime soon gave place to an examination of the contents of his grip.

Had he been aware of all the interest he had created in at least one of his fellow passengers, he might have completed his journey with more credit to himself and with much less waste of inventive genius in the weaving of the yellowest of yellow fiction.

Across the aisle, and one section forward, sat a middle-aged woman. By her side her daughter concealed herself behind a late magazine.

When the lone occupant of number seven entered, the little lady across the way mentally took his measure. From behind her magazine she noted every little detail to the destruction of the cuff bespoiling fly. He was postmarked and his stamp was cancelled in much less time than it takes the master of a country post office to obliterate the usefulness of Uncle Sam's red pasters.

The mother had not noticed her daughter's divided attention. No sooner had the traveling bag been deposited in number seven than it was possible for the lady in number ten to read the tag thereon. It was one of those nice little leather-bound affairs, and bore the inscription, "T. Franklin Porter, Shadeville, Ohio." Number ten smiled as she copied the name and address upon the margin of her

magazine. When and where she had heard of the town of Shadeville she could not remember. She had never heard the name T. Franklin Porter, but in her vivid imagination she mentally remarked: "The first time I ever saw a white Porter of a Pullman. I wonder if he would come if I'd ring; but maybe he is not white. I'll not ring."

T. Franklin Porter was not a sport; he was not even a traveling man. He had never been far away from Shadeville before. Since his early marriage, some eight years previous to this trip, he had amassed two hundred and thirty-four dollars as a notary public and capitalist of Shadeville. He had been on one or two excursions to Cedar Point in the course of time, and he knew that the only safe way to travel was to be accompanied by a bottle of rye. He had seen decidedly sporty fishermen magnanimously pass the bottle of snake-bite to their fellow travelers and among his sundry purchases a pint of the best was the first. Knowing that "A stitch in time saves," he opened his grip and removed a dainty glass and his pint of Old Kintuck. He glanced about the car, and as before, he was traveling alone. T. Franklin did not know that the green covered magazine was but a screen

around which his every movement was being watched. He thought he wouldn't hit it very hard, as he poured out about two fingers and replaced the bottle in the grip. He had never taken his without a wash, and he was about to repair to the water cooler for a chaser when number ten lowered her magazine, and as the morning's sun dispels the shadows of early dawn, so the light of her luminous eyes unloosed the blankness of the benighted mind of T. Franklin Porter. What instantaneous effect! But, no, he had not yet quaffed his traveling companion; at least, he still held in his hand the crystal shell and its contents. He slowly raised his glass and his eyes again met hers of number ten. He lowered his glass and, incidentally, his eyes. After due deliberation and much speculation as whether to drink or not to drink, he again raised his glass and, regardless of all observers, drank the whiskey. The blush that came to his face may have been due to the lack of a chaser, although the lady of number ten was quite sure that the blush was due to shame. Poor lady. T. Franklin Porter never blushed excepting at such times as he drank whiskey straight. He did not blush again on the entire trip. He made it a point to have a wash.

As before noted, Mr. Porter was a married man. What a knockout blow that statement can be made under the proper, or improper, conditions, when just the right emphasis is employed. He had literally fallen all over himself when a demure little golden-haired miss had promised to become his wife. His own regard for himself was of smallest consequence at that time. He knew he was in great good luck when any woman would take unto herself the fourfold burden of his bringing up. For awhile he was grateful, then becoming a notary public and almost a lawyer, he outgrew some of the backwardness of his early manhood. After eight years he became so imbued with self-importance that he had almost forgotten the still fair cause and constant help of her who bore his name.

Well, what has all this to do with this story? Not a thing; so we will go back into the Pullman. Look out—the train is moving very rapidly. You're on, good. The lady had moved from number ten to number three. Mother is still in number ten, taking a nap. T. Franklin Porter was in section number three. How did he—? Who knows? Who would tell if they did know by what supreme nerve he managed to acquire a seat in number

three? He was comfortably seated in number three, however, and the lady was daintily presenting, from her Parisian purse, three cloves, as she said: "I wanted to offer them sooner."

As T. Franklin Porter accepted the killers, he remarked: "Oh, now." He was a kind of a mush, this T. Franklin Porter.

"My name is Franklin."

"Benjamin?"

"Now, no. Thomas, but I just sign it T. Franklin."

"I'd resign it in favor of Ben."

"Now, please don't jest. I am a banker."

"Sand or faro?"

"Now. You don't believe me. Really I am a banker. I am V. P. of our bank."

"V. P. Very poor?"

"Now. No. Vice President."

"Do you spell it V-I-S-E?"

"Why, I think that is the way. Isn't it?"

"Yes. Oh, yes. How far do you go?"

"Back to Boston. That is where the bank is. Do you go that far?"

"Thank heaven, no. Would you mind getting me a glass of water?"

T. Franklin immediately returned to number seven and procuring his dainty shell, proceeded to fill it at the water cooler and re-

turned to number three. If he had been at home and his wife had requested a drink he would have saved himself fatigue by telling her to get it for herself. She had long ago learned better than to ask. But this is different.

"Allow me, my own glass."

"How nice," and, after drinking, "Why did you rinse the glass?"

He reached for the glass with, "Would you?"

"Oh, no, thank you. The cloves were merely a luxury, not a necessity. I don't drink whiskey. I just wanted you to know that I saw you."

"Yes, I seen—I saw, you seen me. Do you have a machine?"

"Yes; a Singer."

"A Singer, now. I mean an automobile."

"Oh, no; but I have a friend who has one, and that saves tire bills."

"Now." He never saw it at all. "I own one, a runabout."

"Run about half the time?"

"Now. I'm a lawyer, too, and a notary public and a justice of the peace. I could marry you."

"How nice. You will find mother back in another seat."

"Now."

"Oh, you mean you could perform the ceremony."

"Yes, and kiss the bride."

"I imagine you are kept pretty busy."

"In the bank?"

"No; kissing brides."

"Now. No, I never married any one ye—"

"Excepting, of course, your wife."

As has been said, T. Franklin Porter did not blush again on that trip, but he began to have a feeling of distant shame. He would have liked to commence to tell the truth to the little lady by his side. He sparred for an opening, but without success. He was floundering in too deep water considering his skill as a swimmer. He was one of those fellows who believe in the professional or business lie. He did not think it wrong to create an erroneous impression for a purpose. He had skilled himself in the telling of lies, but he was too crude to make of his efforts a finished and artistic success.

"You haven't told me your name."

"I haven't told you even a part of it, have I?"

"No." He wondered just what she intended to convey. "But you will tell me your name?"

"Will I?" I suppose I will be handing you my purse to keep for me."

"You can deposit your money in my bank."

"Yes, of course. That's easy; but could I draw it out?"

"Now. Whenever you wish."

The lady played with her purse while talking. She opened and closed it frequently. Cautiously she removed everything of value. T. Franklin was sitting at her right, talking aimlessly. Her right hand, holding the purse, carelessly fell to her side. When she raised her hand again the purse had disappeared.

They talked at random while the train passed from daylight into the night.

Mother's nap was interrupted by the stopping of the train at a water tank. She was startled by her daughter's absence. Before realizing her surroundings she called sharply, "Lizzie!" The young lady, in fact, everyone in the car, heard distinctly, but she made no move to answer the summons. The old lady rubbed her eyes, fanned herself with a newspaper, and discovered her daughter's presence in number three.

Lizzie waited a reasonable time and making some slight excuse, returned to number ten.

T. Franklin returned to number seven with a supreme feeling of conquest. He had no suspicion that his fair inamorata's name was

Lizzie. He rather thought of her as Geraldine or Florence or Clementine. He knew, in returning to number seven that from that point of vantage he could continue the innocent flirtation.

The mother being reassured by the daughter's return, began to doze again.

Lizzie opened her hand bag and searched for something she seemed unable to find. She removed everything from the hand bag and then thoughtfully replaced the contents. She felt in her pockets. She looked down the aisle. Eventually she left number ten to carefully examine number three.

T. Franklin did not leave number seven. He was, however, much interested in the movements of the lady, but he felt some misgivings. Possibly he had some slight presentiment of what was to follow.

As Lizzie returned to number ten, her mother looked up inquiringly: "What is the matter, child?"

"I have mislaid my purse, and can't find it anywhere." She really looked troubled.

"Your ticket? No; I have that." The mother nervously opened her purse to make sure of the safety of their transportation. She was pale instantly. The tickets were gone.

"Don't be frightened, mother. The conductor took our tickets so that we would not be disturbed in the night. They will be returned to us in the morning."

"Oh, to be sure; but the money. There was money in the purse?"

"There was, a little."

"What could have become of it?"

"I suppose the Porter picked it up. All Pullman porters are robbers." This was said loud enough to be heard by the occupant of number seven. He arose and leaning over the back of the seat, asked: "Have you lost something?"

"Oh, nothing much; only my purse."

"You had it in your hand while we were speaking of the bank. I wish I could find it for you." He looked several places where the purse could not possibly be.

"Oh, I guess you can find it all right."

"What do you mean?" He straightened up with the dignity of a Boston banker.

"If I had thought that you really needed the money—" This was said in such an insinuating way that the mother said: "Lizzie, be careful."

"Yes, mother, I will be careful; but if I could only—I'd like to look in his pockets."

"Miss Lizzie!" There was much emphasis on the z's. "You may look in my pockets." With the confidence of right he held open his left side coat pocket first and there—in plain sight—was the much sought purse.

Back to Shadeville for T. Franklin.

Miss Lizzie gratefully accepted the swiftly proffered purse, saying: "Thank you. I was sure you would return it to me." She gave him one of her most winning smiles.

T. Franklin could only return to his seat, saying to himself: "Well, what do you think of that? Wouldn't that make you catch your breath? I am afraid of that woman. She's dangerous." Later he thought more kindly, than he had in years, of the little wife in Shadeville.

The real porter came and made up the berths.

Lizzie awoke the next morning, wondering what she would do next to tease T. Franklin, but as all flirtations end abruptly and with slight satisfaction, so did this one. T. Franklin had reached his destination in the early morning. A grey-haired and bulky traveling salesman occupied number seven, and he was not attracted by Miss Lizzie's laughing eyes.

TWO FLAGS

We come to honor and to bless two flags:
Great Britain's silken scarf entwined with ours
In an embrace of confidence and love
That springs from nature's closest ties of life.

As Britain's flag floats from her own proud mast,
She greets the Stars and Stripes across the sea.
Each cresting wave bears messages of love,
Each zephyr bears esteem as true as steel.

And in return the Stars and Stripes send back
The same glad tidings of respect and love,
As does the child in filial reverence
When far away from his parental home.

So let us bless these flags of Saxon race,
For they are ours to cherish and respect;
And may they ever hold their honored place
Supreme, among the nations of the earth.

WILLIE POORE

My father's name is Poore, you see,
Just common P double O, R, E.
You need not ask, "What's in a name?"
For ours and fortune's is the same.

A bunch of thirteen kids forlorn,
I found at home when I was born.
We were and always would be poor,
So they just named me Will B. Poore.

My pa and ma are good to me,
For I am valu'ble, you see;
For 'twas the luckiest thing they'd seen—
I broke the hoo-doo of thirteen.

And if five girls and four more boys
Should follow us fourteen decoys,
Why, with nine more, we'd poorer be,
For we would be just twenty-three.

A BRIGHT FELLOW

The formality of presenting his friend to his hostess was safely over, and Franklin Courtney celebrated the fact with, "Come on, old man, the bars are down."

His companion pulled himself together in anticipation of greater events as he said: "Wait, the game is not half played. Let us hurry."

The two leisurely strolled from room to room, Courtney speaking to acquaintances as they passed. Evidently he was looking for some one in particular.

The stranger was one of those medium-sized, well-rounded men who are so fortunate as to average well in physique and consequently in appearance. The only remarkable thing about him was his blonde hair, which was the cause of envy in the minds of several fair ladies that evening, and his mustache and Van Dyke matched perfectly. His male ancestors might easily have been Norse Vikings. Suddenly he touched Courtney on the arm.

"There she is. Don't look. She has already seen us. Who is she talking with?"

They halted as Courtney nodded to a group of friends. Under his breath he replied: "I don't know, old man; a couple of elderly ladies. Shall we go over?"

"Try and catch her alone. I'm not feeling very steady."

"Brace up, old man. You're not a bad actor. By the way, what's your name?"

"What did you call me when you presented me?"

"Hanged if I know. Wouldn't that startle you? Talk about carelessness. Wait a minute. Oh, I know, Andrews, Hal. Andrews. The name of an old school boy friend of mine. He will never come back. He is dead. Here is our chance. She is alone. Come."

"Mrs. Adair, allow me to present Mr. Hal. Andrews, an old friend of mine. He is a great traveler. He can tell you a lot of funny stories. Be patient with him a little while, will you? I want to find Dolly and then I'll look you up." The rascal almost ran to get away.

Mrs. Adair received her new acquaintance graciously, making him feel very much at home.

They were a charming pair, these two. Evidently they were very much interested in

each other. They had, at least, found subjects of mutual interest, for while they were the objectives of innumerable glances, they were apparently as much alone as if they were up in a balloon. No one came close enough to overhear even a scrap of their conversation.

Courtney returned in an unnecessarily brief time.

"Mrs. Adair, Hal. and I have an important engagement. We will return this way about eleven. May we pick you up or will that be too early?"

Mrs. Adair expressed her pleasure in accepting the kindness.

As Courtney dragged Andrews away he whispered in his ear: "Come, man, you didn't think I was going to let you stay here the entire evening, did you?"

Courtney returned about eleven and met Mrs. Adair at the door.

"I thought Mr. Andrews would be with you."

"He is waiting in the machine."

Courtney handed Mrs. Adair in. She greeted Mr. Andrews as she took her seat by his side. Courtney took the wheel and in ten minutes he skillfully drew up to the Adair porte-cochere.

Andrews alighted and assisted Mrs. Adair to the door. As they stood there, Courtney deliberately drove away.

With an exclamation, Andrews remarked in his peculiar drawl: "I suppose he will tell me that he went out to turn around."

"You can stop a minute, then. It isn't late."

"No; but Thursday," he said, hoarsely.

Mrs. Adair entered the house and the erstwhile Hal. Andrews was soon lost in the night. The following Thursday afternoon Mrs. Donna Adair, wife of Robert Adair, stood at a window of their home intently looking out upon the street. She suddenly pulled the draperies together and listened expectantly until she heard the ring of the bell. She then dropped lazily into a convenient chair.

In response to the bell a maid opened the door and on the statement of Mr. Hal. Andrews that Mrs. Adair was expecting him, the maid directed him to the parlor by a wave of her hand.

Mr. Andrews deliberately removed his hat and coat. His hands were still gloved when he entered the room. He approached the chair and looked intently upon its occupant.

Mrs. Adair's eyes met his as she said: "Then you did come?"

"Yes;! didn't you expect me?"

"I don't know. I suppose I did."

Andrews laid his hand on the back of her chair while he spoke.

"To tell the truth, I have not the remotest idea of what was said; but for three days I have known that I would be here at this hour. Now I am here, my dear Mrs. Adair, I must give vent to all the thoughts that have made of my brain a whirlpool since we met last."

Mrs. Adair started as if on the point of speaking. Laying a gentle hand on her shoulder, he continued:

"Oh, I know what you are about to say; that we first met less than one week ago, that this is only the third time that we have looked into each others' eyes. Do you know, it seems to me that we have known each other for years,—for always? When Courtney presented me at the Knowles' I did not catch the 'Mrs.' the prefix to your name, and the thought that came instantly to my mind,—dare I speak that thought? I see it is not necessary. Since then I have learned something of your husband. I did not know him. Judging from what I have learned, he is not half bad. He is deeply interested in his work, a big work, I understand; scientific, is it not? He has no

time for the lighter side of life. I had not talked with you five minutes before I realized that you were worse than married."

Mrs. Adair hid her face on the arm of the chair. Andrews continued:

"It was not pity that first stirred me, but your own veiled confessions, the sadness in your eyes brought the feeling. Don't misunderstand me. I am not here out of pity. I am here because—because—Mrs. Adair, can I not, in some way, make—help to make your life happier? Oftentimes the understanding of a friend makes sadness sweeter. I cannot but think that I have come into your—that you have come into my life for some good purpose. I do not want to say things to you that will sound to you like flattery, and yet,—I do want you to know how much—how very much I appreciate your friendship. It is the first of its kind that has ever come into my life. You are the first of all women to make me feel how vacant my life has been. Whether there be a kindred feeling in your mind, or whether it be a weird something in your majestic beauty, I cannot tell. All I know is, I am drawn irresistibly toward you and I am enthusiastically glad. I do not desire to bring unhappiness to your husband. I do not de-

spise, nor do I hate him. If he is the cause of your seeming unhappiness, I might be justly angry. I regret that we did not meet sooner, you and I—much sooner in life. I am sure I might have offered all he has given,—and more. I am sure you would have never been neglected for long. Surely, a man can be little less than a brute,—pardon me, please. I shall not forget and speak of him again. I only want to talk with you of your life and mine. They seem to me so closely linked. If I might take you in my arms and let you know—let you realize all the love one man feels—one who has lately found his heart and his heart's desire. Your eyes have called to me in my sleep. Sleeping and waking I dream of you,—you always. I look upon you as the one grand fulfillment of a heart's longing. Oh, how I have wanted to tell you all this and more. While I have known you the world has grown better, brighter. I dare not think of the past, with all its darkness and lonesomeness. You surely do care, for—in your heart of hearts there is some responsiveness. One could never care, never think so much of another as I think of you without striking some note of mutual feeling in the other. That is life. How considerate you are

to listen to all I have to say. Never was there a desire as great as mine to say to you all I feel. Let me take you in my arms and call you—"

"Mr. Andrews," Mrs. Adair arose and leaned against the chair while she spoke. "Mr. Andrews, please, please do not say more. I have listened to you and I know the kind of man you are. Do not misunderstand me. I am more at fault than you. I have listened and, listening, I have made you bold. Do not think it is nothing to a woman to realize that it is still within her power to stir within a man's mind thoughts of love. You deserve some little punishment, and I stop you now so that you will not deserve too much. I have been thinking what I should say to you. You must know, on sober reflection, that I have not played with you nor with your feelings. I speak to you in all friendliness. If my husband would come to me as you have done, and talk to me as you have, I would be the happiest woman in the world. You must know, Mr. Andrews, fads and even follies may come into a woman's life for a time, but she never entirely loses her interest in, and her love for her home. You must meet Bob. You must know him. He is a man to quite

win your heart. I sometimes think I am at fault. I surely might have made his burdens of the past two years much lighter. We have only gradually drifted apart; and yet, if he were to come into this room right now, I am sure you could detect no unpleasant conditions."

Mrs. Adair resumed her seat and talked in a reminiscent mood, while Andrews quietly stepped backward to an electrolier that stood near the entrance. He removed his beautiful blonde hair, mustache and Van Dyke as he intently watched to see that Mrs. Adair did not turn and see him. He pasted the make-up upon the white globe of the electrolier and lighted the lights. He cleaned his face with his handkerchief and pulled his watch fob out of his pocket, where it had been hidden to escape detection. He removed his gloves, that were evidently worn to cover up certain characteristics of the hands. He stood between the electrolier and Mrs. Adair. Had she turned, she would not have seen the grotesque appearance of the globe.

"He is a wonderful man in many respects. Do you know, I almost shudder when I think how easy it would be for me to be very foolish. I enjoy society. I love a good time. I

am partial to attentions. I am proud, too, of Bob Adair's success. I am proud to be known as Mrs. Bob. It makes me angry instantly to have any one notice his neglect. Some day, I am sure, it will come out all right. Come, Mr. Andrews, draw up a chair and let us talk. Why can't you help me?"

In a changed and more natural voice the man spoke.

"Donna."

Mrs. Adair jumped from her chair. Why, Bob, when did you come? Where is he? Where did he go?"

"He, who, where? Who do you mean, Donna?"

"Why, Mr. Andrews, of course. You must have met him."

Bob Adair took his wife in his arms and gently forced her back into her chair as he said: "You have been asleep, Donna, dreaming. I hope I have some very good news for you, my Donna. Vacation time has come. My work is finished—finished yesterday. I have been asleep since then until an hour ago. I have had some great experiences the past two years. When we have time—I must tell you of one right now. May I?"

"Surely, Bob, do."

"Last Thursday, a very good friend of mine, Courtney, the actor, you remember him, was called into consultation in regard to certain evidence he was to give in behalf of the government. While talking to him on the art of make-up, you know, as employed upon the stage, he dropped the remark that he could so disguise a man's features that he would not be recognized by his own wife. On the strength of a treat, I defied him and in a half hour, under his manipulations, I hardly recognized myself. It was early evening. Courtney was dining with the Knowles'. I was sure of finding you there. He was keen to see the completion of the story, so he slipped me in as an out-of-town friend and presented me to you."

"Bob."

"Oh, I know. It was risky, but I know my wife. I was not afraid."

"Bob, how long have you been traveling with this rapidity?"

"I was not aware of any speed limit."

"The doubt I feel is, that this masquerade may have extended over the past two years, rather than just beginning last Thursday."

"No you don't, Donna. Look at me, dear. That masquerade was the luckiest experience

of my life. But for it I would never have heard you say: 'If my husband would come to me as you have, and talk to me as you have, I would be the happiest woman in the world.' Those were your words, dear, and they made me the happiest man in the world."

Dropping on his knees in front of her, and leaning so that he might be close to her, he said: "Tell me, Donna; tell me you forgive me for the deception."

"I do forgive you, Bob, but, Courtney—never. No wonder he drove away. He had brought you home."

Bob Adair arose and lifted his wife to his knee as he took a seat facing the electrolier. He took her in his arms and kissed her, as he said: "For the balance of our lives, dear, you and I will be chums."

She took his head lovingly in her hands while she whispered: "Bob, that is the first time I have been kissed in months."

He kissed her again as he said: "We will make up for lost time, my Donna. Dear, look at Hal. Andrews; isn't he a bright fellow?"

NEXT TO YOU

Did you ever go a swimmin' when a boy;
Over head and over hands and deeper too?
Did you wear a bathing suit? Not you; O, joy!
When the water felt so kind o' next to you.

Do you ever go a swimmin' now you're old?
Do you wear a bathing suit exposed to view?
Oh! its great, just by the wavelets to be rolled,
When the water feels so kind o' next to you?

Did you ever organize a modern trust;
Take their money from all friends you ever knew?
Did you ever think how easy you might "bust;"
When the water feels so kind o' next to you?

U R A J 2 B EZ

When chappy tries his little touch
For five or ten, 'tis then we see,
It makes no difference just how "much,"
U R A J 2 B EZ.

When long-haired Willie strikes the town,
His backer for a bed you'll be;
For breakfast, too, you will "go down,"
U R A J 2 B EZ.

When blonded lady with her smile
And tickets comes, just "twenty-three";
But no, you'll stay and chat awhile,—
U R A J 2 B EZ.

When your best friend must give a bond,
Take our advice and skidoo, flee;
But no, you'll stay until you're "con'd"—
U R A J 2 B EZ.

A MODEL WIFE

The fact that it was an artist's studio was evident. The place was literally littered with evidence. It was the studio of a painter who was also a sculptor. Charcoal sketches, oil paintings, with and without frames, adorned the walls. Tapestries, bric-a-brac and antique and modern weapons made of the studio a great big cozy corner. Plaster arms defied the lightning, although widely separated from head, torso and legs, which were scattered around the room. The furniture was as elaborate and as varied as may be found in an up-to-date photograph gallery. High backed, wide armed, carved and plain chairs and tabourets offered comfort at every turn. A black walnut easel supported a landscape in just the right light. In the center of the studio stood a modeling stand which bore a large clay figure well damp in rags. The throne stood near the modeling stand, under the skylight. Behind the throne an elaborate Japanese screen hid that corner of the studio. The screen was, in itself, a work of art, but why do

we linger over it? What potent force impels us to look behind the screen in an artist's studio? Does a sensitive nostril detect some delicate perfume? Turn a boy loose in an artist's studio and he will be behind the screen before he has examined one-tenth of the other curiosities the room contains. Probably a straight backed chair and a well stocked pin cushion are the only properties of that seclusion.

Come into the studio and inhale the atmosphere of art. Look upon the works of the hand and brain of a master and think of him. What of him? What of life has he seen to be so much a creator? Is he grey haired? Is he old? Is he bent with the weight of years and experience? Look at the painting upon the easel, evidently just finished. Yes, it is still wet. Whatever the painting is, so is the master. A faint cloud of smoke betrays the presence of that individual. There he sits at a desk, writing—smoking. He is not old, at least, in years. As he sits there, dressed in his black velvet painting clothes, he is as much a picture as one who admires portraits could desire. His massive head and thoughtful face top a frame that sways with a grace that strength of physical power bestows. His very name, Eric, is significant of power.

Eric dropped his pen upon the desk and slowly filled and lighted his pipe. He read the letter he had been writing. Suddenly he looked at his watch and tossing the letter upon the desk, he jumped up and ran to the door and looked out. Returning he walked over to the modeling stand and removed the rags from a portion of the figure. He touched the clay gently and replaced the rags. He glanced toward the door. He knocked the ashes out of the pipe and laid it upon the modeling stand. He stood with his back to the door as it opened.

There were pictures everywhere, but still another was, for a moment, framed by the doorway. She had come to pose. She was a model. She was more beautiful, more human, than the classic Grecian as she stood there poised for a word before entering.

"Is it my hour?"

Eric turned like a flash. "Hello, Rita. Yes, come in. You are always on time."

"Am I?"

"I haven't done a bit of work this morning. Maurice was in for awhile and I have been writing letters. I guess I am lazy."

She removed her hat and cloak and hung them behind the screen. She came out and

noticed the picture upon the easel. She stopped before the picture. "Oh, yes, poor fellow. You are lazy. When did you finish this?"

Eric removed his jacket as he replied. "Yesterday. How do you like it?"

"You shouldn't ask me so soon. I haven't seen it all yet. What a sky. What delightful lights. That's a beautiful cloud. Oh, I see it now. How clever. What a stunning head."

Eric looked up quickly. "Head, what head?"

"Why, there in the cloud. Don't you see? Could that have occurred accidentally?"

Eric picked up his palette and brushes as he said: "It certainly did. I must paint it out." With a brush he touched the white upon the palette and then the yellow. He was about to change the shape of the cloud, then paused as he said: "How strange. Look, Rita, it is your head." His palette arm dropped to his side. "I think I will keep that." Rita moved a step nearer very quietly.

"Shall we work?"

In answer, Rita ran to concealment behind the screen.

Eric put on a French peasant's gown which he wore while modeling. He removed the rags from the clay figure and prepared his

material by dampening and kneading. While he was making his preparations for work, Rita was doing the same. First one and then another shoe was heard as they were dropped upon the floor behind the screen. This was followed by one piece after another of the model's wearing apparel as she threw them to hang over the screen.

Eric stepped back to look at the thermometer as he asked: "How is the room?"

From behind the screen, Rita replied: "All right. Do you know, I think you are the only real artist? You paint a landscape, then you do something in clay, and then back you go to the easel to do a portrait, and they are all great. If they are not in the Salon, they are on some rich man's wall, which is just as good."

The warmth of the appreciation caused a smile to creep over Eric's face. "Yes, I work as some smoke; a pipe now, a cigar then, and occasionally a cigarette. The change lends variety and consequent rest."

"The draperies this morning?"

"Yes, please. Is the robe there?"

"I don't find it."

Eric stepped over to an old cedar chest and found the Grecian robe, which he threw over the screen with: "Here it is."

"What a funny fellow you are, to compare your work with smoking. Why, I never saw you smoking."

He picked up the pipe from where he had laid it upon the stand. "I never smoke while I work."

"Judging from the amount of work you turn out, you don't smoke much."

"Do you smoke?"

"You never saw me."

"Most models do."

"Do they?"

"Yes."

Rita came from behind the screen and stepped upon the throne as she said: "I don't. Oh, I forgot my flower."

Eric handed her a rose. The pose was emblematic of simplicity. A large white lily had been used, but that feature of the work had been finished. It had pleased him to retain the pretty little compliment, so this morning he had provided a red rose. A beautiful big flower it was, too, and its fragrance filled the studio.

Eric did not see Rita touch the rose to her lips. It was but a fleeting movement.

Eric turned to arrange the pose. "The right foot is too far forward. The body a lit-

tle straighter. There, good, just a minute; a touch here and there and this will be finished."

"Are you glad?"

"I am always glad to finish things that satisfy me."

"I think it must be great to be a real artist."

"Yes?"

"Yes, producing something; something that lasts and has its place in the world. I am even proud of my small help in such work. That is why I am glad to be a model."

"Do not underestimate your share in this and the other things you and I have been enabled to create."

"When mother and I came to Paris—we came abroad you know, so that I might study the languages—"

"I knew it. Then—you are an American."

"Of course."

"But you speak French like a native."

"Mother thought that was the right way to learn, so we came where we might converse with the natives. Mother's plans for me were —but when the reverses came and she died, I lost—I,—no one knows how much I lost. My mother used to speak of you often. That was before I first posed for you. She often spoke

of the tenderness and fine feeling that she always found in your work. She wondered often how you acquired your great skill. Oh, a paper just fell from your desk. I guess the draft disturbed it."

"Oh, you are cold."

"Not at all."

Eric found the door closed, but the transom was open. He closed the transom and picked up the letter as he returned. "A letter I was writing to my mother. Let me read part of it to you. It answers, in a measure, your mother's question. 'I still long for those days when you and I were pals. You are the best fellow and the best mother a fellow ever had. It is your knowledge, prompted by a desire to aid me that still exerts its influence over my life and my art. It was from you I learned faithfulness, truth and persistence. I learned life from you, my mother, who gave me life. I learned breadth from you as I learn bigness from the out of doors. Yours is a heart that knows no bounds and your love for me has given me my love for the beautiful in life, of which you,—you and one other, are my all in all.' "

Eric folded and returned the letter to the desk.

"How beautiful she must be—"

"She is—Oh, you mean mother. Yes, beautiful. Did I never show you her picture? He took his watch out of his pocket and releasing the fob locket he opened and handed it to her.

In taking the locket, Rita accidentally dropped it, and as it struck the floor the opposite side sprang open and exposed a miniature of her own head. "Why, there is my picture."

Eric picked up the locket and again handed it to Rita. "Why, yes. Yours on one side and mother's on the other. Isn't that a good picture of mother?"

"It is the picture of a dear old lady—but this of me?"

"Yes, I did that one day while you were posing. You did not see. Was that stealing? Rita, how many times have you posed to me?"

"This is the sixty-seventh day."

"Sixty-seventh?"

"Yes."

"And you have been coming here—?"

"Eight months, tomorrow."

"You are up on dates."

"Some dates."

"Rita, have you ever posed for Le Fere?"

"Once."

"Once?"

"Yes, for about five minutes."

"Le Fere is quick."

"Very."

"Please resume the pose." He went to the throne and arranged the draperies. He looked up into her eyes. "You are a queen."

"Oh, no."

"Yes, you are. You are an American, and to an American you are queen. May I speak to you, Rita? May I say to you all I—"

She motioned to the screen. "Let me—first."

"You would let me speak, then. Let me speak now. Rita, I love you. I love you, Rita; that's all I know. I love you."

"Tell me that again."

"I love you."

"And I love you, my Eric,—I believe I do. If it is love that makes me think of you always. If it is love that makes me know that it is wrong for me to think of you—that it is wrong to let you know, I think of you."

"Why wrong?" I tell you I love you; that my greatest hope is, that you will be my wife."

"Wife?"

"My wife."

"Say that again."

"My model wife."

"My Eric, I never hoped to be so happy."

"You darling; we will be married and sail for America."

"My friend, my dearest and only friend; you know that can never be. Listen: I have been a model—model to Rausch, Everett, Cailes, Van Pont, Le Fere—"

"Le Fere for five minutes."

"Ah, do you not think five minutes a very long time? Why, my Eric, let me tell you; for that five minutes he just stood and stared at me."

"Yes?"

"He then came to the throne and touched me, here."

"Brute!"

"Yes, brute; not artist, brute! I tried to jump away from the throne, but he grabbed me and called me: 'Little fool.' It seemed to me that he would crush the life out of me, when, luckily, through over-confidence in his own strength, I was allowed to break away. He tried to reach me again, but I was too quick. I ran to the screen. He would have followed me, but in a pocket behind the screen I had this." While speaking, Rita had gradually moved to the screen, and reaching back, she produced a small revolver. "He did not

dare further. Then came his soft, persuasive argument. It was all in fun. I should not blame him for becoming infatuated with my beauty. 'Some women,' he said, 'have no right to be beautiful.' I shouldn't expect so much. He was only a mere man; and I,—I was only a model, an artist's model. Didn't I know what that meant? Why do artists pay such high prices for models? It was easy to see. Where was the model who was not proud, who did not boast that she was a little more to the artist than a mere model? All models were—. Oh, I cannot tell you. He made me know, then, that I could never have real love, to be a wife,—a—a mother. You see, my friend, I cannot do as you ask. It is not I, but you, who must be considered. Your—"

"Rita, dear, listen. Do you think art would be art if it could cheat woman out of her womanhood? Could art, the greatest charm of which is woman, rob woman of her purity to produce that charm? As you have said, I have painted many pictures that have been recognized as works of art. I have been successful as the world admits, but I would forego all the pleasures art and success have brought me to take in my arms the proof of your womanhood and my own manhood.

Rita, my models have been to me but models. I do not ask whether you have been more than model, I—"

"Do ask it, my Eric, do ask it. You do not know how very much I desire to answer you that question. Do ask it, do."

"I will ask it, my darling, but in my own way. Will you be my wife?"

A whispered, "I will," and a kiss was her answer.

Sometime later Eric looked up and said: "I must finish my letter to mother. I have so much to tell her."

BE RIGHT

When fortune frowns, no ups, all downs,
And ev'rything's gone to smash;
Don't ever rave, stand up, be brave,
And you will avoid the crash.

'Tis by their might they dare do right,
That many a battle's won
By braver men, than five in ten,
Of those who have faced a gun.

Be not a knave, but be, just brave;
Be right, when your race is run.
Dishonest craft is only graft,
When all has been said and done.

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